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Carlene Allred

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THE ALASKAN CAVER

Volume 26, Number 1

January, 2006



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.

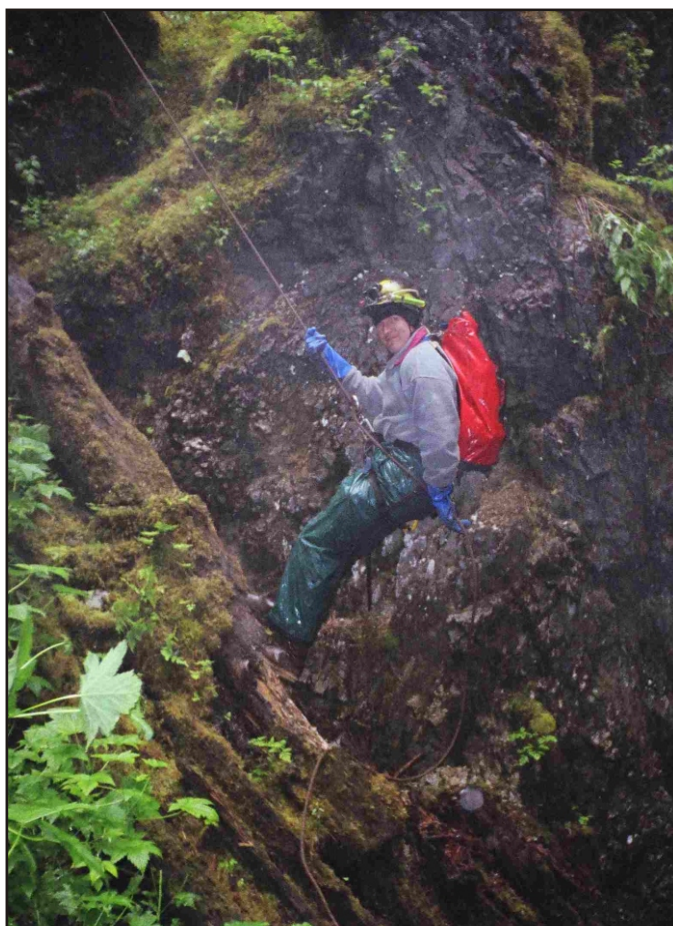
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STARLIGHT CAVE: A PERFECT FIRST UNDERGROUND EXPERIENCE

by David Fish



*Kevin Allred dropping into Starlight Cave,
photo by Ella fish*

Being my first time in a cave, I most likely missed many of the small wonders of caving. Yet I greatly enjoyed the opportunity to experience a little-travelled part of the earth--- underneath it.

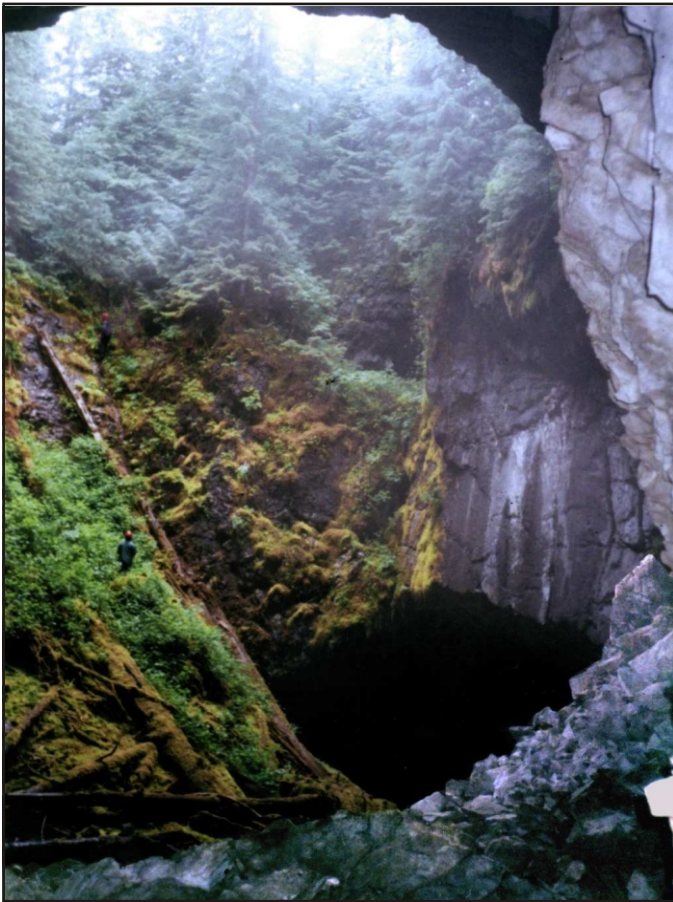
Last summer my parents came to visit my new bride and I in wonderful Alaska. Since Kevin Allred is my father-in-law, I couldn't pass up a chance to show off Alaska's caves, and see them for myself. Ella, Kevin, Carlene, George (Dad), Karen (Mom) and I took the ferry from Ketchikan to Prince of Wales Island. The long drive out to Whale Pass was a nice relief from the short roads of Ketchikan.

The next morning we headed straight to Starlight Cave. The
(continues on page 3)



Front cover: Elderberries in bloom just outside the upstream entrance of Cavern Lake Cave, Prince of Wales Island. Photo by Karen Fish

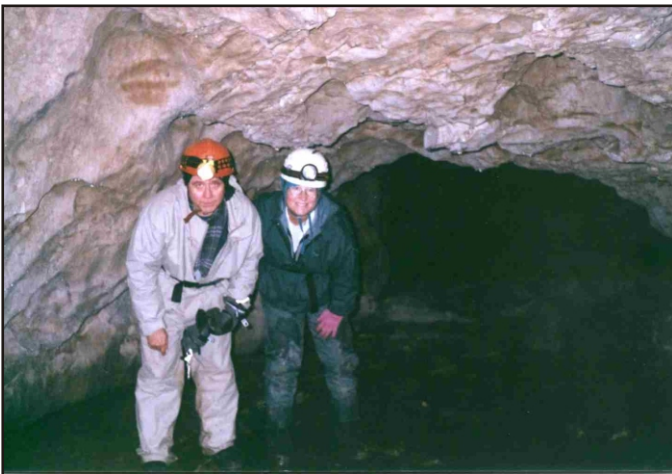
*Back cover: Cavern Lake, fed by Cavern Lake Cave,
Prince of Wales Island. Photo by Karen Fish*



David Fish descends into Starlight Cave while Ella Fish looks towards him. Photo by Carlene Allred

descent into the entrance was through lush greenery on one side wall, countered by a rocky wall on the other. A giant cave opening sloped down below and we climbed steeply into darkness. The other cave entrance actually sloped up to a much smaller cave.

We ventured into the largest entrance. We could hear running water underneath the breakdown we crossed while traveling along the sunlit wall. Once we reached the top of a breakdown pile (and certain entrance) we turned on our headlamps. I was glad to be

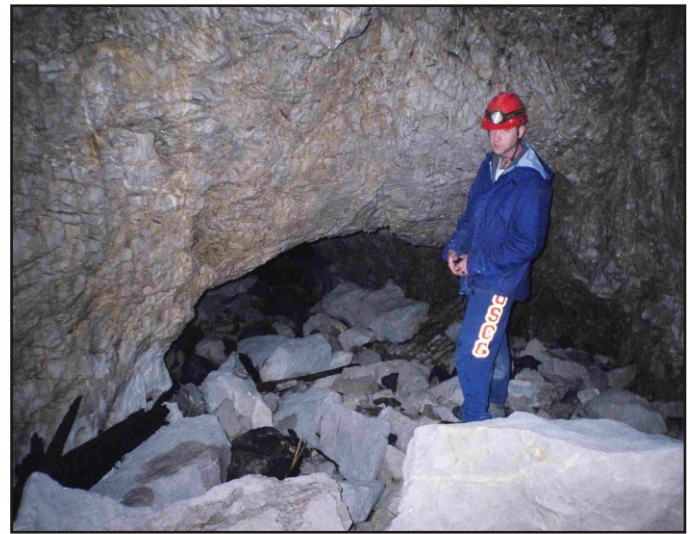


George and Karen Fish pause at a pool in Starlight Cave, photo by Carlene Allred

using safety gear, as I was in a new environment. All sections were cold in the cave. Sitting was cold, whether on smooth ground or breakdown rocks. Starlight does not have any fancy stalactites or bacon, and such, but we had fun viewing huge ceilings and the short and stout tunnels. At the end of the cave we found the sign of the cave name, being the sunshine coming in from holes in the ground high above. My sun-loving eyes were very happy to see this, as I am from Florida.

After Karen took enough pictures to fill a museum we traveled back to the beginning. I found myself wanting the cave to be longer, with more mysteries to explore. Once in the main drop-down spot, Kevin, George, Karen, Ella and I explored the smaller cave. It dropped deeper quickly and became too narrow for a big group like ours. I was impressed not to have felt claustrophobic at all while in such tight quarters. Comforting indeed.

After a snack and some water we strapped on ascending gear and returned to normal "above-landers".



David Fish in Beaver Falls cave, photo by Ella Fish

During our trip we visited Beaver Falls and Cavern Lake Caves. In Beaver Falls Ella and I noted some very out-of-place black rocks scattered throughout. Maybe brought in with high waters. This was another great experience. [Editor's note: these black rocks sound like the noncarbonate cobbles coated with manganese, probably originating from the igneous dikes that intersect the cave area.]

At Cavern Lake Cave the river was much too high to travel inside, but the entrance did look interesting. My parents from California, and I from Florida, had a great time enjoying this Alaska treat. We look forward to more of this and hope to be cavers one day. ▲



Photo by Diane Raab

WHO'S WHO In Alaskan Caving

By Bruce White

Jim Baichtal, affectionately known as the Beachtroll. Senior Geologist USFS Tongass National Forest Fellow, National Speleological Society # 33277

After long and considerable thought, I made the decision to showcase an unsung hero of our Grotto. He's a ponderous man, who quietly makes a difference in the Tongass National Forest protecting our unique and sensitive wild caves. He has a profound effect on our relationship with the Forest Service because he IS the Forest Service, or as we affectionately call it, "The Evil Empire." No, skip that part about being an unsung hero because he's sung about often. His name and exploits have been extolled around campfires at our expedition base camps, late at night, in the rain. His deeds have been re-enacted, illuminated and glorified by firelight coming from a wood stove, his stories swirling in the primeval steam, fogging half crazed, naked steam bathing cavers all across the Tongass. His calm, quiet and respected participation in our grotto assures us that he will defend us from those who think we are just a bunch of pinko, tree hugging environmental fairies and low lifes. Forget that stuff about the FS being the "Evil Empire." The Forest Service walks a crooked road trying to manage a great mix of resources between users and protectors each with inflexible agendas, be they lofty idealistic goals or people just trying to put food on their table. Almost everyone takes pot shots at the FS and I'm no exception even though I understand their need for compromise and diplomacy.

He is the great arbiter, preventing past above-mentioned dancing fearless leaders from making our expeditions a vegetarian delight, an orgy of beans and tofu. More than once he has come through with a can of ham, some corned beef or other mystery meats to keep us on the aggressive edge of savage manhood and keep the women of the tribe, uh, ... I mean expedition, fit for 3 pitch vertical assents. Why, without the infusion of meat, a tin of Spam flown in here or there, we might all have been content to sit on the edge of 400 foot pits contemplating their depths and visualizing the mapping by remote viewing, or other new age methods such as mental telepathy.

At this point I should caution all who read this story, that it is just that, a story. These are my personal reflections and in no way depicts the true character or opinions that any sane human may have of Jim. Recognizing the fact that Karen loves him and even married the old mountain man, he must have some exceptional redeeming characteristics not divulged in this yellow journalism. Thus said, take it with a pinch of snuff between the cheek and gums, then sit back to hear a tale worthy of Jim himself.

I met Jim about three days into my first expedition on Kosciusko Island. The boonie barns and other supplies had been barged in just in time for us to sort through all the material and make a base camp. Fearless Leader #1 had reviewed with us safety procedures and other details as we made exploratory trips out in the bush to a place where lots of caves were suspected. Jim came in late that afternoon sporting a beard of wild facial hair and a huge folding knife slung from his belt. He looked FS because he wore a standard Filson wool FS green uniform but he talked like one of us. He stressed how much he needed our information to further the cause of Karst protection. I turned to Dr. Dan quietly (as Jim whipped up his troops) and asked if this guy was for real. Dan assured me he was a sensible man but had a predilection for speechifying.

Looking about our camp and his soldiers, he wanted to inspect our provisions. "What's for dinner?" he asked as he picked through the vegetarian stock of supplies. He didn't think much of bean burritos and apples. I could tell he wasn't impressed because I saw him on the sly start high-grading the Power Bars for the banana and double chocolate mochas. I suspected he was squirreling them away for a late night snack.

After dinner he spread a large topo map on the hood of a truck and started to advise us on the hot spots he had reconnoitered previously. He dramatically detailed his points on the map using the tip of that huge buck folding knife intermittently cleaning his fingernails with the tip. I don't accurately remember if he actually picked at his teeth with the knife, but it fit with the character I was beginning to understand.

(continues on page 14)

LETTER

Tongass Cave Project

PO Box 53
Tenakee Springs, AK 99841
October 30, 2005

ADEC Pesticide Program
Attn: Sandra Woods
555 Cordova St.
Anchorage, AK 99501

Re: Klukwan Aerial Permit

Dear Sandra Woods,

The following are my comments for the Tongass Cave Project regarding the application by Klukwan Inc. for a permit to spray pesticides on Long Island to inhibit or kill salmonberry and alder in their regenerating clearcuts.

The comments are divided into two sections. The first explains why we do not feel that aerial applications of pesticides should be used at all in Alaska, and certainly not in forestry related applications. The second discusses special circumstances related to the karst landscapes found throughout much of Southeast Alaska and on most or all of Long Island where the proposed spraying would occur. These special characteristics of karst make aerial spraying of pesticides much more hazardous than over those areas with "normal" hydrology. Karst landscapes are those found over soluble rocks. They frequently contain sinkholes and caves, and are characterized by underground drainage systems. The analysis of karst on Long Island submitted by Klukwan Inc. last year for a similar application was seriously flawed. An examination of this document by karst hydrologist Thomas Aley found that the analysis was fundamentally flawed, failing to show an understanding of the basics of karst hydrology and karst systems in general, and of the way that application of pesticides aerially is certain to enter the waters draining such a system.

At a minimum, a complete and thorough dye tracing of the entire karst drainages proposed for spraying and any adjacent drainages that may be subject to overspray must be completed and

thoroughly analyzed before any spraying is allowed on Long Island. In fact, overspray has been documented on occasion to drift as far as neighboring Dall and Prince of Wales Islands (and the ocean waters separating these islands) and so one might assume at the outset that a permit for aerial spraying should be denied.

Aerial application of herbicides and pesticides has proven devastating to the salmon stocks of our southern neighbor, British Columbia. It is an old fashioned method, with great potential for dispersion of toxins beyond the targeted area or species. While the initial expense is no doubt less for such a technique, the long-term costs can be immeasurably greater. Much larger quantities of pesticide must be used for aerial application than target specific methods because much less than 10% of the material applied actually reaches the target. The remainder affects other species, including ecologically critical species, commercially important species, and our own species, humankind. It seems ludicrous to me that the state of Alaska is, at one and the same time, promoting organic, pure, stocks of wild salmon for market, and proposing to spray poisons over large tracts of land that contain the spawning grounds for these fish.

Mechanical application of herbicides has been shown to be effective albeit more expensive in forestry applications in British Columbia and Washington. A hatchet-like device is used to inject each tree with a measured dose of herbicide. Compared to aerial spraying, this technique creates more jobs and causes much less environmental damage.

The "pesticide-free zones" that your regulations require might, under ideal conditions, and with diligent monitoring and huge fines for violations, work in non-carbonate systems. However, such monitoring would require state workers with adequate training and appropriate equipment to be on site for at least several days before and during and after aerial application. They would need to monitor all streams within many miles of the application, perhaps as much as fifty miles downwind. Fines for violation would have to be so severe that parties interested in using this

(continues on page 6)

LETTERS... continued from page 5

Technique don't find that violations are cheaper than using alternative and more appropriate techniques. I believe that literature suggests that pesticide free zones are almost impossible to guarantee at the scale at which important streams are found here in Southeast Alaska. Even assuming adequate buffers may be possible in terrain with "normal hydrology", this is definitely not the case for karst landscapes which are found throughout Southeast Alaska. Unlike better known hydrologic systems, karst streams are fed directly through pores in the soluble rock underlying what is usually a very thin soil layer. It resembles an inverted colander, with billions or trillions of tiny inputs feeding directly into the subterranean stream systems. These conduits are not filtered at all, but rather act like big sewer pipes. Whatever goes into this system comes out just about unchanged.

Karst waters supply some of the most productive salmon streams in Southeast Alaska. Because of the diffuse nature of the inputs into karst waters, it is impossible to use aerial spraying in or around such landscapes. In fact, to adequately protect karstlands, they should be treated as gigantic streams or lakes when determining what constitutes pesticide free zones.

Because the geology of Alaska is relatively poorly documented, areas with karstlands underlying forestlands are not well mapped. While we do know that vast areas of Southeast Alaska are underlain by limestone and marble, the Tongass Cave Project and others continually discover new and unmapped karstlands as we search for and research the caves and karst of Alaska. All lands considered for aerial spraying and all lands within range of potential drift need geologic mapping before spraying is even considered. Otherwise, public waters, rare troglobitic (cave related) species, and salmon will be put at risk. The documentation that Klukwan Inc. provided through its consultant last year was pitifully inadequate for Long Island, an area known to contain high vulnerability karst.

Once again, we recommend that the permit to spray on Long Island by Klukwan, Inc. be denied. The money it will save Klukwan, Inc. will be lost many times over by other Alaskans as spraying affects the perceived and perhaps real quality of the organic salmon that our state so greatly depends on. The

spraying will also damage subsistence areas for inhabitants of nearby communities, particularly Hydaburg, Craig and Klawock. Please do your duty as an agency that looks out for the welfare of all Alaskans and reject this permit.

Sincerely,
Stephen W. Lewis
Director, Tongass Cave Project ▲

Modern Cavemen Crave

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OVERALL
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***The name LEVI'S is registered in the U. S. Patent Office and denotes overalls made only by Levi Strauss & Co.**

This ad was found in The NEWS, an old NSS publication from 1956, and is included in this publication for entertainment only

WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A SPELUNKER, A SPELEOLOGIST, AND A CAVER?

By Jo Schaper

What is the difference between a spelunker, a speleologist, and a caver? These are a few terms you might want to know what they mean before you start flinging them around.

Spelunker--

A spelunker, technically, is a person who goes in caves. Originally derived from the Latin *spelunca*, (and the related Greek *speleios*), it comes from the Middle English word, spelunk, meaning cave or grotto. The word, spelunk, apparently went out of common use about 1600, though the adjective, speluncar (pertaining to caves) continued into the mid-19th Century. The name of the French bulletin of Le Societe de Speleologie*--founded by Edouard-Alfred Martel in 1895--was *Spelunca*.

The first modern usage of spelunker in America was probably that reported by Clay Perry in Underground New England in 1939, describing a group of men and boys engaged in "a more or less systematic study of the caves and old mines of the area" who called themselves Spelunkers. Life magazine in the early 1940's may have been the first widespread use of the term in print in an article named, "Life Goes Spelunking." Through the 1950's, spelunker was apparently used as the generic term--with no good or bad connotations. A movie shown at the 1955 NSS Convention by William Hulstrunk, was entitled, "The Spelunkers." The MSM (Missouri School of Mines) Spelunker's Club was founded during this era, and the name continues to be used by that MSS grotto. Other popular publications of the '50s refer to spelunkers and spelunking without the slightest blush.

Sometime in the 1960s (according to Joe Walsh, and probably during an earlier upsurge of interest in venturing underground), spelunker began to take on the connotation of rank amateur, while those "in the know" but not degreed scientists began to refer to themselves as cavers. Steve Knutson (editor of American Caving Accidents) makes the same distinction in a 1995 article given at a Risk Management conference:

..."Note that I use the term "spelunker" to denote someone untrained and unknowledgeable in current exploration techniques, and "caver" for those who are."

Spelunker, at this time, carries with it the image of a tennis-shod explorer, caving in cotton clothing by the light of a hand held flashlight, with butane lighters for backups. They are notorious for descending freehand, on cotton or manila rope, with little thought for the ascent. Pushing Coleman lanterns in crawlways is another favorite spelunker trick. Spelunkers differ from novice cavers in that (usually) the novice is attempting to learn correct technique. According to Clive Keen of British Columbia, "calling someone a spelunker up here is a serious insult." In the States, one wishing to be taken seriously avoids the word in self-reference, corrects others who accuse him or her of being a spelunker, and proudly displays the bumper sticker, "Cavers Rescue Spelunkers."

Speleologist--

Also has its roots in the beginnings of modern, systematic caving. Martel attributes its origin to Emile Riviere in 1890--as a derivation of the French form "speleologie." Martel was by education a lawyer, not a scientist, and early speleology was seen more as branch of geography, than one of the more traditionally experimental sciences. The coining of the words, speleology and speleologist seems to have been an attempt to legitimize what was a questionable exercise in the minds of most surface dwellers.

Speleology has always been an interdisciplinary science, requiring one to have at least a smattering of geology, hydrology, biology, chemistry, climatology and survey techniques in addition to whatever specialty one has.

Most early speleologists were amateurs, not trained scientists, and even today, it is rare to find a degree in speleology or karst processes. The 1950's saw the rise of legitimate speleology, as scientific methods began to be applied to caves and cave life. Many experts in the field are trained as geologists, hydrologists, biologists, surveyors, are teachers, or employees of land management concerns such as parks or commercial caves. Some speleologists even today are largely self-educated in the field, with jobs having nothing to do with natural resources.

(continues on page 8)

What distinguishes a speleologist from a spelunker or a caver is data. Whether it be maps, reports, drawings, photos, or full-blown scientific research, a speleologist aims for state of the art professional standards in his or her data production. A cave trip from which a speleologist learns nothing is a wasted effort, and the scientific bent frowns on purely recreational caving. Even so, many speleologists begin as cavers, "graduating" to speleologists as some aspect of the cave environment becomes their own personal niche for investigation.

Caver--

So what is a caver? Unlike spelunkers, whose skills are questionable, and speleologists, who seem distinctly serious and un-fun, a caver may be considered the middle of the road cave explorer. Cavers enjoy caves for their own sake, and most people whose interest in caving is primarily recreational consider themselves cavers. Cavers often possess the best technical skills in moving safely underground, and many of the innovations in new equipment have been invented by cavers.

Cavers are known as the discoverers and explorers of new caves, the people who ridge-walk and dig, rig rope and cave dive, driven by the hope of virgin passage just ahead.

Cavers will survey and map, just for the privilege of naming the passages with some awful pun. Some cavers are ardent photographers, not so much for documentation, as for slideshows and video to entertain fellow cavers.

On a more serious note, one subset of cavers have become expert at cave search and rescue in order to provide a safety net for fellow cavers. These cavers are often called out by local fire and police forces to effect rescues for which the paid emergency services are ill-equipped, and rarely trained. So they get out of bed in the middle of the night, and travel long distances to rescue perfect strangers for no other reason than they have the know-how.

Some cavers become well-known as speleologists. Others become that strange creature known as a speleopolitician who tries to conserve

caves by dealing with the various landowner and cave controlling agencies. And others disdain notoriety, and simply cave because they enjoy it. A great love of caves and their critters drives them--and they work to preserve their private paradise, with no thought or interest in others except for their caving buddies.

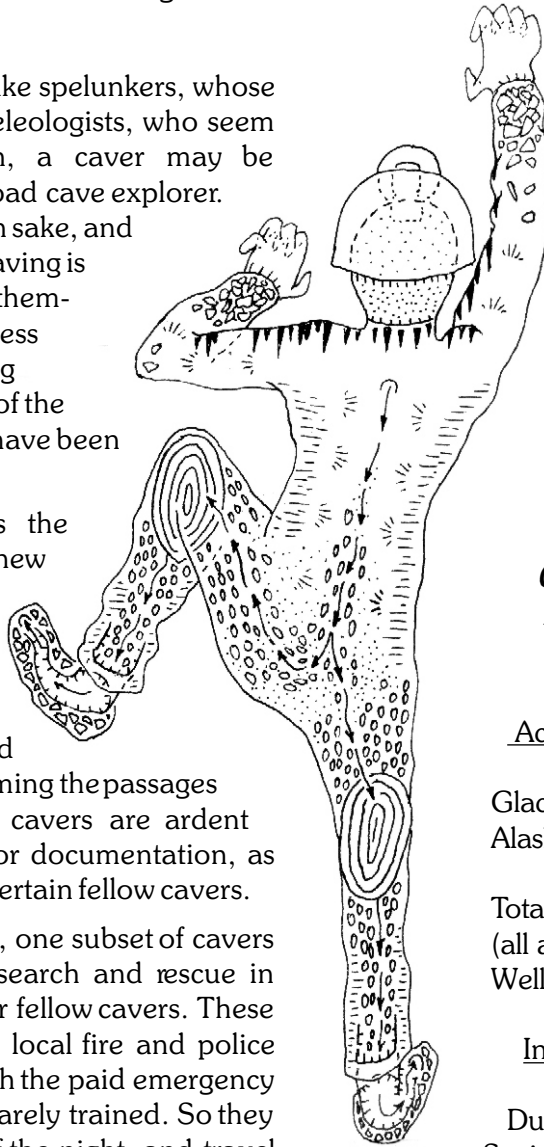
So now that you know the difference--what are you? A Spelunker? A Speleologist? or A Caver?

From the following website----
<http://www.umsl.edu/~joellaws/ozarkcaving/mss/spelunk.htm>

Written by Jo Schaper with special thanks to Joe Walsh, Bill Mixon, Clive Keen and others for assistance.

Last updated: March 31, 2003

The graphic included on this page was created by the editor. ▲



GLACIER GROTTO 2005 FINANCIAL STATEMENT

(as of December 31, 2005)

Account summaries

Glacier Grotto account balance \$1657.06
Alaska Cave rescue account bal. \$906.50

Total all accounts: \$2563.56
(all above deposited into Glacier Grotto
Wells Fargo savings account 5/18/04)

Income

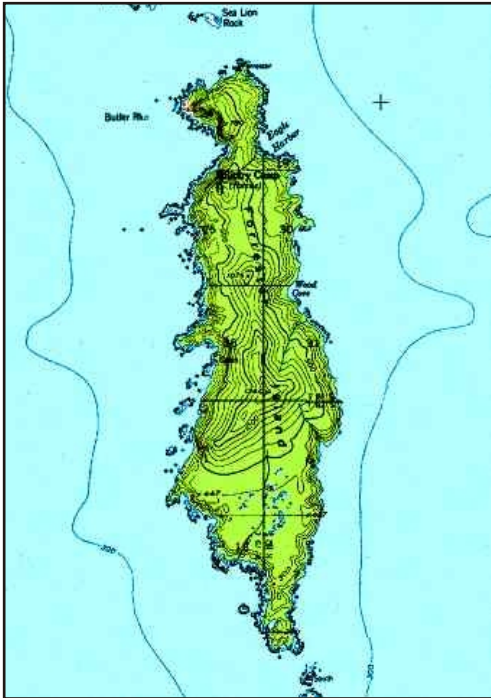
Dues \$540.00
Savings Account interest \$ 9.29
Total Received: \$549.29

Expenses

Alaska Caver Publication/postage \$265.41
Total Expenses: \$265.41
Ending Balance: \$2847.44 ▲

FORRESTER ISLAND CAVE UPDATE

We, the directors of the Tongass Cave Project, were surprised to receive an e-mail from Susan Schulmeister several months ago. The surprise was partly because someone thought we were "gentlemen," but also because we hadn't realized that



we were violating any rules when we visited Forrester Island a few years ago. On our trip, described in an earlier *Alaskan Caver*, we'd circumnavigated the island in Pete Smith's boat, Goest, and, seeing some likely

looking holes, found a way to tie up and explore and map the caves. We'd seen what looked like ancient fire pits as well as prolific bone deposits. Earlier this year, while working with Fish and Game on Lowrie Island, just north of Forrester, I'd talked with Madonna Moss about our finds. She is a well-known archaeologist who has done many SE Alaskan excavations including the obsidian quarry on Suemez Island. She was planning to have a look at Forrester and was very interested to hear of our earlier finds.

We, (well, Kevin) being a diligent and responsible caver, had written up the reports and drawn the maps of Red Lichen Cave and Soft Shell Cave, and Madonna got copies, either from Kevin Allred or the Forest Service. She, being a person who gives credit where credit is due, cited us as the finders of these caves in her report to the Fish and Wildlife Service, managers of the Wildlife Refuge. And thus, our letter which follows:

Gentlemen,

I am the Special Use Permit coordinator for the Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge, and am contacting you regarding Tongass Cave Project Reports #343, Red Lichen Cave and #344, Soft Shell Cave, on Forrester Island. A staff member recently brought the reports to my attention and asked if we had prior knowledge of these activities. I called the Forest Service for more information about the Tongass Cave Project and learned that you are generally considered the directors of the project.

I wanted you to be aware that some islands in Southeast Alaska, such as Forrester, are administered by the Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge. We require Special Use Permits for research activities on Refuge lands so that we can review the proposed activity for compatibility and resource concerns and receive copies of resulting reports. On Forrester, for instance, if the proposed visit coincided with the seabird nesting season we would be concerned about whether access could be achieved without crushing burrows or otherwise disturbing nesting birds.

One of the folks I talked to with the Forest Service said they do not always require permits of you because sometimes the activity would be considered recreational, with a report tendered as a courtesy. In other cases, in the past, formal cooperative arrangements have been made.

I'm not sure whether we would consider your activities "research" or "recreation"; but I would ask that in the future you contact our office before visiting caves on islands administered by the Refuge so that we have the opportunity to sort that out. If you need more information about which islands in Southeast Alaska we administer, I would be happy to help.

Please contact me if you have any questions at all.

*Susan Schulmeister, Refuge Operations Specialist
Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge*

(continues on page10)

Kevin Allred, Steve Lewis, Pete Smith

It's good to see that the Forest Service is still pursuing its long-standing policy of cooperative relationship with cavers, explaining how they are able to work with cavers in a way that benefits all, and especially the caves. We hope that this continues and the rough edges that sometimes abrade that relationship on both sides continue to wear smooth. We also appreciate that the Refuge took a non-confrontational approach to this issue. I tried to maintain that approach in our response:

Hello Sue,

Thanks for filling us in on the details of access to Forrester Island. Our trip there was a last minute--weather is great--let's see what is out there--trip during an expedition to Dall Island. We hadn't really expected to see any caves, and were already aware of the bird nest situation----access to these caves was up rocky shoreline only.

We felt that getting the information out was important and were able to share this information with other researchers who went through the appropriate channels for their work.

We'll be sure to contact you before any future work on Forrester, Lowrie, the Hazy's or other FWS managed islands in future.

Thanks again for putting us into the loop, and our apologies to you for not following the regular procedures in this instance. I'd be interested in learning who to apply to and what information you might need to approve a permit to access caves close to shore that can be accessed without crossing potential burrow sites.

Sincerely,

Steve Lewis

Director, Tongass Cave Project

So, per Sue, here's the scoop for caving on FWS administered Refuge lands in Alaska.

The refuge has a web site - <http://alaskamaritime.fws.gov>. Click on the "What

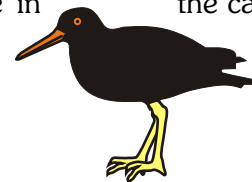
We Do" button and you will find Special Use Permits. There are instructions for both commercial and research permits. Questions asked in addition to the basic Who, What, When, Where, include things like the study plan, method of access, will anyone be camping on the Refuge and for how long, will any fuel be needed, will this activity take place in Wilderness, etc. Fees are waived for research permits where no commercial activity is involved. Applicants' study plans are given to our biologists for review so that they can identify any resource concerns or restrictions that may be appropriate to address in the permit stipulations, and so that they know what kind of studies are happening on the Refuge. Completed applications are sent to the Refuge address and usually given to me, unless I am not available. We ask for 6 weeks advance notice for issuance of a permit but are sometimes able to expedite if the work load and circumstances warrant.

Thank you for replying and good luck with your cave studies.

Sue

So, it looks like cavers will be working cooperatively with all the public land managers in Southeast Alaska as we work to protect our caves and karst. The raised littoral caves on Forrester are not even limestone, but our expedition led to verification that they have been used by humans for a long time. While I haven't seen Madonna Moss's report, I have heard that she documented human use in both "our" caves and also in every other site she explored this summer. We hope she continues to contribute to the understanding of the Tongass and Southeast Alaska that our caves are helping to provide.

And, in the future, we'll do our best to plan ahead and seek permission to access caves in the Maritime Wildlife Refuge. Thanks also to the Forest Service, for acknowledging that recreation and research can go hand in hand. It often works best that way - for those in the caving community and for the caves we cherish. ▲



SPELUNKERS COPING WITH S.A.D. SYNDROME

by K.A. Science



Consider this scenerio: an otherwise gregarious, positive, normal person encounters the long dark days of winter.

Compounding this, they degrade themselves by wallowing in a sunless cave for several days. The result is a distraught, depressed, suicidal wreck.

This is due to Seasonal Affective Disorder, or "S.A.D.", and is especially prominent amongst spelunkers in Alaska. The usual remedy for this ailment is exposure to full spectrum light, over 90% of which is absorbed directly into the eyes. Unfortunately, the discusting habit of spelunking takes the people who need ultra violet the most, away from any possible sources.

Having familiarity with some of you unfortunate spelunkers, I have designed a special hard hat-mounted light which has the potential of supplying all of the daily ultra violet requirements in just a few hours of spelunking. Here is how it works:

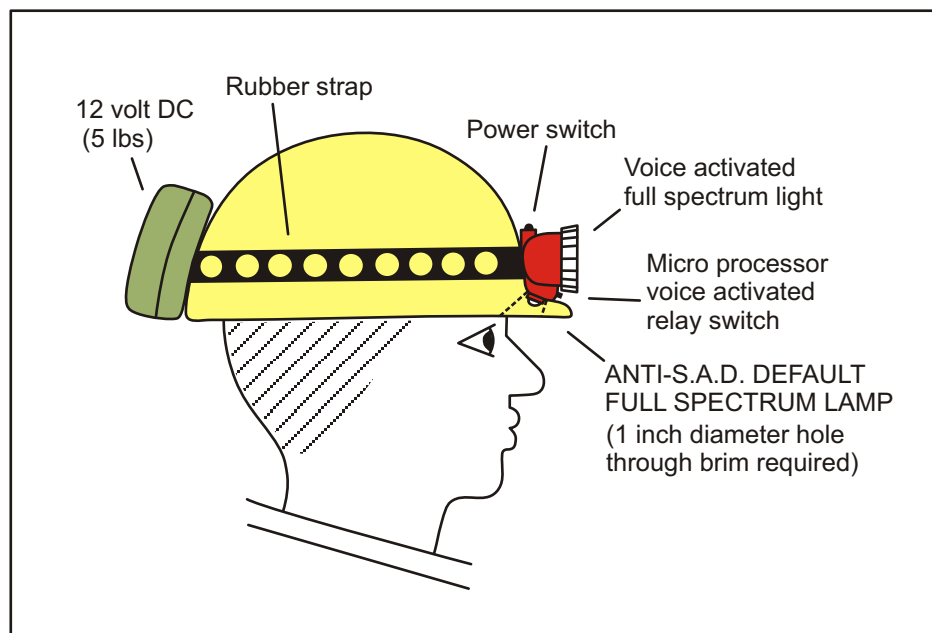
The light fixture is actually composed of two separate high intensity full spectrum lights. One light is mounted so it is directed into the eyes. The

other light is pointed in front of the person. A voice-activated computer chip is switched by the word "see" to turn on the forward bulb. If "see" is not said again within two seconds, the light switches to the eye-facing mode. This way, exposure to the light is guaranteed except when the person absolutely needs to move in the cave. When on the forward mode, the full spectrum light can benefit other nearby spelunkers (See figure below).

A few months ago our engineering group from Mud Bay Institute built a prototype and sent it to Sitka for testing. Unfortunately, we have not yet recieved a report, but there may have been some damage in shipping, for the light arrived back in a crushed condition. I'm certain, though, that this invention will revolutionize the spelunking world and have many other possible uses.

Sincerely, Dr. K.A. Science

Ed.Note: I have a friend in Sitka who claims they were harassed on the street by a homeless woman wearing a hardhat and repeatedly yelling "See! See! See!". Could this be related? ▲



BEACH PARK CAVE

by Forrest Allred

The day was Tuesday, November 2005. There were five of us at the beach park [editors Note: This cave is on the Island of Hawaii]; Tina Mander, her son Jessie Strickling, Kevin Allred, his wife Carlene Allred, and their son, myself.

Early that morning Jessie, my dad and I climbed into the lava tube entrance. Once inside the tube we were quickly forced to our hands and knees, then to our bellies. The passage often switched from walking speed to crawl space.



Jesse Strickling maneuvers through a tight place in Beach Park Cave, photo by Kevin Allred

Our goal was to continue surveying the lava tube beyond where Kevin had left off several years ago, and when we reached his last survey point we had to stop and dig the passage open into a bigger opening so that we could continue on. Once through, we started surveying.



Jesse as compass man, photo by Kevin Allred



Forrest Allred and Jesse Strickling in a gypsum-covered corridor, photo by Kevin Allred

After three hours of exploring we reached a big room partially filled with debris. While Kevin and Jesse set up the survey point I went on ahead. I entered a low passage leading away from the big room, and after walking a while I started seeing small amounts of what we later decided was gypsum. Impressed by the beautiful white coatings, I continued on. The further I went the more gypsum I saw and soon the walls and ceilings were covered in it. Entranced by the beauty of the passage I continued still onward.



Jesse poses next to some drip stalactites, photo by Kevin Allred

After several minutes of picking my way through the tunnel the gypsum started giving way to beautiful lava formations. At one point I came across a
(continues on page 15)

THE HALLOWEEN SEWER HAUNT OF 2005

by Kara Lunde

A Halloween nightmare: cold water embraces your extremities in its hypothermic grip as you slip deeper and deeper down the dark city sewer. The cold numbs your hands and feet but not enough to deaden the discomfort of duck-walking, crawling, and sliding through the narrow tunnel, pulling yourself over shovels wedged between the corrugated metal ridges and gingerly picking your way over the rusted floor. The rest of the group gets further and further ahead, anxious to make their way to the end of the tunnel before the tide fills in the mouth. The rushing water fills up your ears with sound and you wonder how far a shout would carry if it came to that. The ghosts and goblins moving from house to house up above would be oblivious if you couldn't go on. Your mind begins to drift. As your limbs cease to respond and your lips drink in the dirty storm water, your spirit whispers, "Haunt this town from up above. Don't trick-or-treat below the ground."

The scenario described above is fictional. For those of you who did not join the Halloween Sewer Haunt of 2005, no one perished beneath Ketchikan on Halloween night. However, the discomfort, cold, and rust were all too real. Most of you realized that this would be the case. You didn't show up. As a neophyte in the realm of the underworld, being cold and wet underground seemed to hold some romantic mystique. I am not sure what my husband's excuse is and I really don't understand what keeps Kevin coming back to the sewers of Ketchikan for more. Apparently, a dry suit comes highly recommended.



*Carlene sloshing through the icy, wet storm drain,
photo by Kevin Allred*

My husband, Eric, and I met Kevin and Carlene shortly after 5:00PM and quickly piled into our vehicles



*Kara and Eric sitting in the lower entrance in the tidal zone,
photo by Kevin Allred*

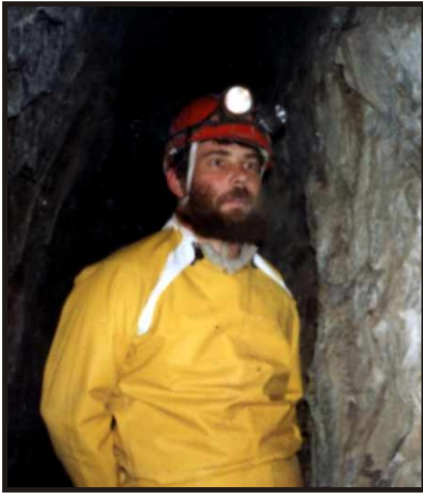
to drive down to where the mouth of the storm drain protrudes through the riprap in the intertidal zone. We left their vehicle there and drove up to the place Kevin had selected as the starting point of the expedition. We descended down a short steep bank, slipped through the bent bars attempting to cover the mouth of the drain, and we were in. Kevin went first, Carlene followed, and I let Eric venture ahead of me. The drain was roughly 36 inches in diameter where we entered and did not vary except as it became misshapen and rusty further into the culvert. I am uncertain of the angle we followed down the tunnel, but by looking at the neighborhoods around Carlanna one can get a general idea. With the rain coming down steadily outside, the water was deep enough that it flowed through my rain gear and filled my boots within seconds of entering the culvert.

The first ten minutes we traveled the sewer it was fairly easy going, but soon the bottom of the culvert was rusted out and one had to be careful to avoid the jagged edges concealed beneath the dark rushing water. Sights of interest included two shovels and areas of the sewer where water actually flowed into the culvert through the corroded sides. Kevin had told us that there were three places where we would exit the culvert before finishing the route above the salt water. When we first reemerged into the above-ground streambed I prayed that I wouldn't have to go on. Who knew that on Halloween night I would see my prayer answered. Carlene was the first to voice her desire to stay out of the sewer for the rest of the night, but she encouraged the rest of us to go on without her. I insisted that I was happy to accompany her back to the

(continues on page 15)

WHOSE WHO... continued from page 4

As the evening turned into night, we all started talking cave stories and harrowing rescues we had been apart of. I was new at this cave business so I didn't have any rescue stories yet but most of the crew had goodies galore. By the light of the fire, Jim started one of his patented stories of which he is so famous for.



Jim Baichtal pauses during a mapping/exploration session in Whispering Canyon Cave, photo by Carlene Allred, 1992

"I was caving in a wild new cave on POW when I came so close to death that not for my cool head and focused drive I'd be dead meat. We had dropped that pit in a waterfall and spent a little time exploring the floor when the stream began to increase. I let the others get out first and by the time I got on rope the cave was rapidly filling with water. I was up to my neck treading water when I finally got on rope and started out of the deathtrap this cave had become. I was 50 feet up the rope when "Whaa Whoosh!!!" the stream became a torrent crashing down on my head."

"Like a salmon swimming upstream I fought my way, inch by inch up the rope, my strength faltering but my resolve to save my hide driving me on."

I was enraptured by his story. Jim has a true gift for story telling which NO ONE who knows him will dispute. I could feel the cold water crashing on his head. I was gasping right along with him as he struggled for air in the deluge. I felt the currents sucking me down that monster hole clawing at my feet as he recounted every detail and weaved a perfect picture in my mind of the saga. I was drained emotionally after his story in the stillness that set in. He had saved his life, plucked himself out of the jaws of death one more time.

That story deserved a moment of silence as I stood in awe of the effort and danger he faced with a smile on his bearded mug. Dan sat there with his usual deer in the headlight 100-mile stare, contemplating, while others just walked away in silence

shaking their heads.

The night was wearing thin and we had our marching orders for the next day. Jim took off in his truck to sleep under a tree or in a cave; or maybe I've mixed this trip up with another. No matter, the facts may not be truthful but the story is as honest as Jim's recounting of the "Wha Whoosh" cave. Later I found out the name of the cave was Scallop Cave and I couldn't wait to drop into that bad boy.

The next day after a full 10 hours of caving, he showed up again. He gave us more directions and slipped Boris a can of Spam. No one saw it, but I detected the smell of real meat later that night. I was too weak from starvation to rip it out of Boris's hands so I was forced to beg and Boris took pity on me.

After that meager meat feast I asked Jim what he wanted us to find. He said, "A mammoth carcass with a spear imbedded in its side, and the hunter crushed underneath him." That made sense. We had talked about funeral rites at some point that other night. Some of us wanted to be left in the bottom of a cave, others buried at sea, a few wanted to be cremated taking a couple barrels of oil with them as they exited this earth. Jim wanted to be buried in full mountain man regalia, flintlock and hatchet across his chest. I don't remember if he suggested that his wife or a virgin should be sacrificed and laid with him in his grave but again, it fits the story I'm telling even if it isn't strictly the truth. He said he wanted to leave a legacy for some future anthropologist to devote their life to when they dig up his bones. He hoped the same thing was in the mind of those paleo-hunters as they contemplated their deaths, the hunters he knew were here once long ago.

So now you have heard one of the best "Jim" stories but you can't get the full impact of the death scene in Scallop Cave till you drop that bad boy. I promise you it is well worth the trip! It is my intention to poke a figurative hunter's spear into Jim's side with this article, all in fun.

In all honesty, Jim is a powerful force and a strong ally to the Tongass. As he and I both grow long in the tooth, I worry who will ever take his place and as for myself, I wonder how many more expeditions I have left in me. I'm sure if it was up to Jim after this article, he hopes I have many expeditions left in me, all meatless, boonie barnless, and forced to swim and walk the whole way! May God Bless you Jim, You have done a good thing and that legacy will live on until some generation doesn't care about the Tongass, then you and I will truly die. ▲

OBITUARY

THE PASSING OF JENNIFER GRIFFIN

On January 16, 2006 Jennifer Kay Griffin age 35, passed away peacefully in the loving company of her family at her sister's home in Colorado Springs, Colorado. She had bravely fought a very aggressive form of breast cancer for almost 4 1/2 years. But true to who she was, Jennifer rarely complained. Those who knew her were inspired by her strong will and joyful, loving, teasing humor. Jennifer continued to live her life to it's fullest possible as long as she could, and never quit fighting this disease. But mostly she never lost her sense of humor, joking and teasing with family members until the very end.

Born in Colorado Springs, Colorado in 1970 to Robert and Adeline Griffin, Jennifer lost her mother to breast cancer in January of 1978. She lived with her aunt Carolyn and Vince Linden, in Albuquerque, New Mexico, through her elementary school years. In her pre-teens she moved back to Colorado to live with her 2 brothers and her sister in Colorado, graduated from Adams City High School and attended Western State in Gunnison. Her daughter Michaela, who was the very joy of her life, was born on April 30, 1991.

In the summer of 1996 as a single parent, Jennifer's desire to study marine biology and to be near the ocean inspired her to leave Colorado and drive to Juneau, Alaska to attend university. While there she met her future husband and fell in love with Alaska. She obtained her bachelor's of science in biology, worked briefly for the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, then deciding she wanted to become a teacher. After obtaining her Master's in Fine Arts degree in teaching in the spring of 2001 from the University of Alaska Southeast, Jennifer took a job in Colorado teaching biology at the Elizabeth High School. After cancer treatments in late 2001 and 2002 she returned to Juneau to work for Juneau Douglas High School and to establish a home in Alaska. Jennifer and David were married June 22, 2003.



Jennifer Griffin at the smaller entrance to El Capitan Cave

In the caving community, Jennifer was known for her work with Steve Lewis, involving radio tagging and studying the communal roosting of female bats.

Jennifer is survived by her husband, David Love, daughter Michaela Nicole Axtell, brothers John (Ginger) Griffin, Robert (Jaime) Griffin, sister Andrea (John) Pennington, three nieces Andrea Griffin, Nicole Murphy, Brigid Jennifer Griffin, four nephews Robert and Garrett Griffin and Daniel and John Pennington. She was preceded in death by both parents.

A celebration of Jennifer's life will be scheduled for June in Juneau. Anyone interested in attending may contact David at the following address. The family asks that contributions in Jennifer's name be sent c/o David Love, 6740 Marguerite St, Juneau, Alaska, 99801. ▲



BEACH PARK CAVE, cont. from pg. 12

passage in which the floor looked like railroad tracks. There were constantly side passages going off the main passage. After several minutes I turned back and returned to my father and Jessie.

We continued surveying for several minutes before stopping to go on a "pleasure walk" of the tube. We walked for several more hours until the passage would no longer allow us to go on.

When we finally left the tube we found that we had been inside of it for eight hours. We then took one last swim in the ocean before retiring for the day. ▲



HALLOWEEN..., cont. from page 13

truck, as she was cold and tired. Kevin said that he would be glad to stay with Carlene so that Eric and I could continue on. Eric decided that his feet were too cold. I cannot speak for Kevin, but Eric, Carlene, and I had no desire to go on in this particular part of the city's netherworld. I can imagine putting up with cold, wet, cramped conditions if there was the hope of discovery and adventure, but the idea of continuing on when the potential for discovery only went as far as lost hand tools and rusted metal seemed ludicrous to me at the time and continues to live in the realm of the ridiculous.

I couldn't believe what a short march brought us back to the truck. We had surely been in the culvert for hours traveling miles on our hands and knees. We drove back down to where we had parked the other vehicle and had a short look in the other end of the culvert. This part of the sewer was wider, roughly 48 inches in diameter, and after a short duck-walk we came to a small square room where we could stand comfortably. From the room, the sewer became oblong and was made of concrete. The ceiling was lower than the stretch nearest the saltwater. Although this part of the sewer did pique my interest, I was beyond wanting to embark on an uphill crawl through the water. We exited the sewer and went to haunt warmer drier quarters for the rest of All Hallows Eve. ▲

The Alaskan Caver
2525 Fourth Ave.
Ketchikan, AK 99901

Address Service Requested

