

June 1997

Alaskan Caver, Volume 17, No. 3, June 1997

Dalene T. Perrigo

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The **Alaskan Caver**

Volume 17 Number 3

June 1997



The Alaskan Caver

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Dalene T. Perrigo - Editor

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Table of Contents

Name That Cave	1
President's Corner	1
Letters	3
Exchanges	5
Regional Lessons	6
Herring Roe on Karst Cave	8
Rubber Caver	9
Miscellaneous	10

Cover Picture: Marcel LaPerriere descends into Starlight Cave.
Photo Credit: Cat Woods

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Annual dues are \$15 for a single and \$20 for a family membership. The Alaskan Caver is included in the membership fee. For an additional \$8, six Cavers will be sent by airmail to overseas addresses. Institutional subscriptions are \$20 per volume. Send dues to Glacier Grotto Treasurer.

- Anchorage Meetings: Call Bob Hicks for details. (907)248-2830.
- Ketchikan Meetings: 7 p.m. the first Monday of the month at the Alaska Public Health Service Building, 3054 Fifth Ave., Ketchikan.
- Fairbanks Meetings:

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Formations sparkle in the cavers' lights at Soltice Cave in Southeast Alaska. Photo credit: Steve Lewis

CALENDAR

Oct. 7-10, 1997....Karst and Cave Management Symposium/13th National Cave Management Symposium, Bellingham, WA. Rob Stitt, (206)283-2283, e-mail rstitt@wingedseed.com

Oct 10-12, 1997.....Philadelphia Grotto 50th Anniversary Gala and Mid-Appalachian Region Fall Meet, State College, PA. Frank Strahan (215)549-1908 e-mail sumped@voicenet.com.

South Central Grotto Meetings.....Call Bob Hicks for details. (907)248-2830

Ketchikan Area Grotto meetings are the first Monday, at 7 pm at Ketchikan Public Health Center 3050 Fifth Ave. 247-1559

Alaska Cave Rescue.....meets each Tuesday at 7 pm, at Kave Sports, Ketchikan. Frequent rope practice sessions. Sonnenberg 247-1559

NAME THAT CAVE

by Alan Murray

How a cave gets its name can be more interesting than the cave itself. A name can come from a person, place, or thing. Or, it can come from an event. One perfect example of this took place in April 1996. I was in Klawock to meet up with Marcel LePerriere and Tom Fouts. We were going to help Ward Serrill with his slide presentation, and then spend a few days caving. Late that evening, after the slide show, several other cavers pitched in and we started to pack up the equipment. It was then that Ward told all of us about his and Marcel's close brush with death!

Ward was driving a borrowed van, which automatically set Murphy's Law into motion. Marcel was coming over on the ferry, so Ward set out to pick him up in Hollis. Just short of his destination, Ward heard a loud bang and hissing noise, followed by the sounds and vibrations of an engine trying to self-destruct. Ward was able to hitch a ride the rest of the way to Hollis and told Marcel the bad news. As fate would have it, they were able to hitch a ride back to the van. Their "Good Samaritan" said he would be glad to tow them back to Klawock with his truck. What started out as a big problem was looking much brighter. There was a light at the end of the tunnel after all! Upon reaching the van, their new found friend pro-

duced a not-so-long towing strap. He decided that with all the gear in the van, he would fold the strap in half so he could double its strength. After the strap was tied, Ward and Marcel got back into the van and noticed that the vehicles were really close together. It was at that instant that the "pedal to the metal" form of acceleration was activated by the lead vehicle.

Everything not tied down stamped to the rear of the van, including the screams of its occupants. Only white knuckles remained in the front seats. So what do you do when you're going 50 mph and all you can see is the back of a truck 4 or 5 feet ahead of you? Ward and Marcel both lunged out their windows to try to see any curves coming up ahead. Marcel would yell,

Continued on page 2

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Every once in a while we get some really great news of which we can all be very proud.

This particular gem took about two years to reach fulfillment, but it was worth it. Not only does it bring long overdue recognition to somebody who is synonymous with caving in Alaska, it draws at-

Continued on page 7

Mr. Steve Kimball
Thorne Bay District Ranger
P.O. Box 19001
Thorne Bay, Alaska 99919

Mr. Kimball,

The purpose of this letter is to address the subject of the proposed water bottling operation presented by Mr. James C.C. Wang of Alaska Premium Beverage & Bottling, Inc., at 18506 80th Place South, Kent, Washington, 98032

The Glacier Grotto is the Alaskan statewide chapter of the National Speleological Society. It is the stated purpose of the Glacier Grotto, as well as the NSS, to promote the exploration, conservation, and protection of caves and karst. With that philosophy in mind, and after reading a copy of the letter sent by Mr. Wan to Jim Baichtal, dated May 30, 1997, the following points need to be made.

First and foremost, I would insist that all provisions of the Cave Resource Protection Act of 1988 are followed and enforced. Secondly, while the description, both written and graphic, of the physical operation seems to suggest that the entire endeavor can be accomplished with virtually no physical impact on the caves and karst, and an absolute minimum impact on the surrounding areas, I still find that I need some assurances that several concerns are, or will be, addressed satisfactorily. These concerns are:

1. Proposed basins, located in the resurgences of El Capitan and Calder Bay caves (or any other cave) must be at such a location and elevation, as to not cause the natural flow of the water in the cave to be altered in any way. This would include, but would not be limited to, such events as a lowering of water levels, flooding, or the raising of water levels in any part of a cave or karst feature. No change of any kind should be made to a cave or karst feature, or to anything that could affect a cave or karst feature, even if it would mean an improvement in the quality of the water collected, or the ability to establish, or to continue the operation of, a water bottling enterprise.

2. There must not be any disturbance to either the terrestrial or aquatic life that utilize the caves as a necessary part of their life cycle.

3. Current recreational use of the caves, El Capitan in particular, must be allowed to continue. The present level of tour operations, and any future changes to that level, should not be influenced by the fact that a water bottling operation is either proposed or active.

4. Exploration of a cave needs to be allowed to continue. While there may be periods of time when a conflict could exist, every effort must be made to set aside reasonable times when explorations can proceed. I feel that it is imperative that all forms and means of cave exploration be permitted. In particular, cave diving must not be excluded solely because of the presence of a bottling operation. It is frequently found that much of the dry passages of a cave will be explored and surveyed, leaving untold amounts of the cave blocked by submerged passages.

5. Scientific projects and archaeological searches and discoveries should be given priority when the scientific community feels that such studies could be jeopardized by operation of the bottling plant.

6. Is any type of "royalty" or other continuing fee in place for the benefit of the USFS, or even better, for cave maintenance and/or exploration? It seems most appropriate that since the caves are supplying the water, there should be some type of reciprocal compensation or benefit.

7. Has any consideration been given to time limits for the duration of the bottling operation? Do we want this to be here for the next 50 years or more? Are guidelines to be setup that monitor the maintenance and repair of equipment, and removal if not properly followed?

Given the small amount of information that I have to date, I feel that these comments are by no means complete. Not only may some of my concerns already be addressed, but other potential problems may have as yet to be discovered. While it takes some amount of time to reach many members of the Glacier Grotto, I did feel that an early response needed to be made. I am presently contacting all the officers of the Glacier Grotto, and the general membership as well, in order to solicit additional comments and to draw from the varied expertise of our members. I would like to compliment Mr. Wang on his willingness to go about this in the right way, and in displaying a desire to protect the very resource he wishes to utilize. I will say that on the surface the plan looks good, and that it should be possible to implement without any adverse effect.

Please keep me informed as new developments occur and as more information becomes available. If any views or concerns that I have expressed on behalf of the Glacier Grotto are in need of revision, I will notify you immediately. Thank you very much for your time and consideration.

Sincerely, Alan J. Murray

May 28, 1997

Jimmy Deherrera, District Ranger,
Ketchikan Ranger District
Tongass National Forest, Ketchikan Area
Attn.: Sea Level EIS
3031 Tongass Avenue
Ketchikan, AK 99901

Dear Sir,

I am writing this letter to express a few concerns members of the Glacier Grotto have regarding the upcoming Sea Level Timber Sale.

As you know the Glacier Grotto is the state wide chapter of the National Speleological Society (NSS). One of the primary goals of the NSS, and the Glacier Grotto is preservation of karst, and caves of all types. The Sea Level area contains at least four known karsted areas.

The Ketchikan Area of the Tongass National Forest has been the leader nationwide within the US Forest Service in recognizing the importance of karst. Unfortunately, much of the known karst within the Sea Level Area has already been negatively impacted by past timber extraction, and road building. We would ask that any further impact to karsted areas be mitigated, that you follow all laws governing caves under the 1988 National Caves Resources Protection Act (NCRPA), and that the new TLMP guidelines regarding karst be followed.

Over the past few years members of this Grotto have spent many days ridge walking some of the karsted area within the Sea Level Area. It has been our observation that the geologic maps regarding carbonate rock have not always been accurate. We noted that the geologic maps in the vicinity of Marble Creek were off by as much as 1/2 mile. We also noted some discrepancies in the geologic maps in the vicinity of Bruinn Point.

In the Marble Creek area we found two caves already impacted by timber harvesting. One insurgence cave we named Arachnphobia, has tons of road building, and logging debris pushed into the entrance pit. We also noted several highly developed karst features, including numerous sink holes, and extremely deep grikes. Many of these features are in old growth, and could be impacted by any action taken within units 80, 81, 82, 87, and potentially others. Another observation we made was the poor regeneration on karsted areas near Marble Creek. It doesn't take a botanist to see the difference between regeneration on the non karsted verses the karsted areas. One further note on the Marble Creek area. Arachnphobia Cave has been nominated as a significant cave under NCRPA. Any further harvesting near Arachnphobia Cave would further impact the cave, and would most likely be illegal.

As you know NCRPA protects more than just caves located within karsted areas. There are many rumors of caves in the vicinity of Painted Peak. These caves would also be protected under NCRPA if deemed significant. There are also substantiated rumors of burial caves in Carroll Inlet. Obviously, these caves would be protected under many Federal laws.

The members of the Glacier Grotto recognize the importance of wood products in today's society. We also recognize the importance of timber related jobs within the Tongass. We further understand that budget cuts, and political pressures make it very challenging for you to effectively do your job as resources managers. It is for this reason that the Glacier Grotto would like to offer our services as volunteers if you need help walking units to insure no caves will be negatively impacted. Many of our members have worked as volunteers in the past for various Ranger Districts within the Tongass. Over the past 10 years we have worked extensively with the Craig and Thorne Bay Ranger districts helping survey karst features, plus exploring and surveying caves. If the Ketchikan Ranger District needs help with any of the before mentioned, we will endeavor to help.

Thank you.

Sincerely, Marcel LaPerriere, Past President of Glacier Grotto

EXCHANGES

Muddy Litter Letter 35 March/April 1997 (May 97), p2-7. The Bylaws of the Cave Rescue Section (CRS) of the National Speleological Society (NSS) state that the purpose of the CRS is to provide a means of disseminating and exchanging cave rescue information; to encourage the development of cave rescue skills techniques, and equipment; to promote and encourage safe caving practices; and to serve as the liaison between the National Cave Rescue Commission (NCRC) and the membership of the NSS. The CRS is open to all persons interested in cave rescue and safe caving.. The March/April issue of Muddy Litter Letter features Part 4 of "Considerations For Technical Rope Rescue and Introduction of TAC ROPE KIT Mountain Rescue/Fire Service Version 5/14/96" The article comes with drawings that are intricately labelled.

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DC SPELEOGRAPH (53) 4 April 1997 p.4. "Is It or Isn't It? Practical Joke Underground" Two Nittany Grotto members heading for a dig project in Montana had an unexpected encounter underground. Near the dig, they suddenly stopped short. Ahead, up a steep slope were two red eyes staring back. This is mountain lion country, so the two brave cavers stopped and discussed the new development. The eyes remained fixed and the head didn't move, so they decided it was not alive. Also they doubted that a mountain lion would be that far back into a cave. Nevertheless, they approached it cautiously. As they got closer they were able to unravel the mystery. Someone had taken a small piece of wood and attached round, red reflective spots a measured distance apart. It was carefully placed so that anyone approaching it would see "eyes".

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Meramec Caver, February 1997, and DC SPELEOGRAPH (53)44. "Cavers Have Responsibility To Make Caves Seem Safe to Landowners" The case is that of a caver (Joe) who was digging a new entrance to Smith Cave alone (a first violation of safe caving rules) when it had rained before and during his dig (another violation), and did not shore up at the dig site (third violation). One might also ask Joe why a mapped cave needs another entrance when it already has six, but the caver doesn't take the trouble he got into necessitating a rescue as serious because he has good, friendly relationship with the owner of Smith Cave. Others argue that with a bit of thought accidents can be avoided. While Joe may be able to appease the Smith Cave owner. The impact of the publicity about the incident goes beyond that particular landowner, and new cave owners may

have a different reaction. This incident at Smith Cave is not the first time people have been rescued from caves in that vicinity but it is the first time that the person could be definitely identified as an organized caver. Previously we were able to lay landowners' fear to rest by assuring landowners that we were experienced cavers and part of various cave organizations that emphasized training and safety and that only unorganized cavers were likely to need a rescue. Locally this was true; now it is not. About one in three owners that we contact for the first time respond by asking if we're not going to need to be rescued "like that guy over at Smith's." Joe's rescue has been added to the local folklore of cave related incidents.

We recently stopped at a landowner's house where the owner, without prompting, recited every cave rescue that ever took place in the area that I knew of. Only two of them had made the media, and some of them occurred about the time of his birth. The caves in our county are privately owned and we can predict that there is a threshold of rescues that, once crossed, will result in mass closures of caves in the county due to the perception that caving is too dangerous.

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The HOLLOW EARTH NEWS (4)3 April 1997, p8. "Roger's Cave, Iowa County, Wisconsin, January 19, 1997". The author takes a temperature survey and bat count in a cave he hasn't visited in 10 years. He found 5 big browns, 29 little browns, 2 northern long ears, and 22 pipistrelles for a total of 54 bats. . The air temperatures in the cave ranged from 43-52 degrees, with most of the bats in the section where the ceiling temperatures were in the 44 degrees. range.

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The CLEVE-O-GROTTO NEWS (43)4 April 1997. p32. "My Thoughts & My Thanks" by Derek McDowell (Explorer) Caving, well, caving was an interesting experience. The things I experienced I can't say much about because I am speechless. What I can say is that it rocked. I've done many things and this came out at the top. I also am very appreciative about the grotto members taking us into the cave and loaning us equipment. Being 5'11" the helmet came in for a lot of use. If you ever want to see which helmet was mine just look for the one with the most dents. In a lot of ways I leaned more than I think I did. I learned there was life down there besides bats. I also relearned about the formations and how the caves were actually made. I think I leaned more in the cave than I think I did. I was most disappointed about was the way people had trashed the cave.

Regional Lessons

by Rob Knotts

My wife, Libby, and I attended the Northwest Caving Association's regional meeting in Shoshone, Idaho, over Memorial Day weekend. It was fun. We'd been living in eastern Oregon for a year and a half and still hadn't met any cavers or gone caving in the area. This was a perfect opportunity.

I don't know how many people attended, but I would guess, no more than a hundred. They came from Utah, Idaho, Washington and Oregon (many friends of the Allred's and Dave Klinger). By 11 P.M. Friday night the lawn at the fairgrounds was filled with tents, and more cavers were arriving all the time.

I learned many new things at the meeting, starting the first night. Did you know that you should always examine nearby telephone poles for light fixtures when pitching a tent in a public place? Especially when every decent campsite will be taken hours before dark.

The next morning I learned pahoe-hoe is your friend. It was my first lava-tube experience and I must admit, if pahoe-hoe is my friend then limestone is....well, I don't know what exactly, but it's really good. Not that lava was bad...

We went with a group to Pot O' Gold Cave, about 30 miles west of Shoshone on BLM land. The cave is 2.2 kilometers long, with passages so huge I couldn't even fathom their true size until the next evening, when we watched a slide show that used cavers for scale. In retrospect I re-

alize my super-deluxe nite-light could barely illuminate the far wall at times.

It occurred to me during the course of this first "sporting" event I've attended in many years, that something was missing. It wasn't the barbed lava or unwieldy gates, or even the fact that eight other people were traipsing along with us on the reflector blazed path (talk about a good idea for a managed cave, tiny red and white reflectors discretely placed along the correct trail).

Sunday, Libby and I went sans group to Arco tunnel, a wild cave in Craters of the Moon National Monument. We had to get a key from the visitors center. That act alone nearly cancelled the trip.

Park Service employees are very anal about enforcing rules, all of the rules, to the nth degree. Park Service management guidelines specifically state that all caving parties must carry two light sources per person, must wear protective head-covering (available at the front desk) and sturdy leather shoes, and must consist of at least three persons over the age of twelve. This means three 12 year-olds with Coleman lanterns and candles get in, two adults with nine lights between them and full caving gear don't. It took three supervisors, a signed affidavit, and a four-hour trip-limit agreement to ultimately get in.

I was stopped at one of the maze-like system's many junctions, reading our complimentary Arco Tunnel map, when the missing element finally presented itself. It was the walking around, looking at stuff,

saying "wow, cool, look at that," then moving down-passage to the next interesting feature that clued me in.

No lying in the mud to sketch or read an instrument, no 15 station series of half-meter shots, no sense of accomplishment; just passive observation. I didn't like it and felt compelled to sit down and sketch something. I wound up taking my map and marking approximate locations of all the spray-painted graffiti we came across, just in case the Park Service needed the locations.

After carefully tip-toeing through aa and still leaving the bigger half of my clothing snagged behind like a flag-trail, and reading through a few grotto newsletters on display, even attending a couple of official caver-type meetings, I reached the inescapable conclusion that the Glacier Grotto and Tongass caving are the best, no contest. Not to brag or anything, but it's hard not to be proud of our Grotto, our caves, and particularly our Grotto newsletter (it's actually a magazine) *The Alaskan Caver*.

It is too easy for me to lose focus of the big picture sometimes. Politics and hassles inherent to Alaskan caving cloud my vision like a smoky passage. Visiting with cavers from other areas and hearing their problems or touring their caves and actually seeing them firsthand, helps me realign my thoughts and concentrate on things that are truly important. One of those is the opportunity to chart our underground treasures with the best group of cavers a body could want.

tention to our Grotto and makes all of us stand just a little taller.

In case you have been living in a vacuum, I'm referring to the presentation of the Lew Bicking Award to Kevin Allred by the National Speleological Society. The purpose of this award is to give recognition to a member of the NSS who has shown a high level of work and dedication towards a detailed and thorough exploration and mapping of a cave or group of caves. I had to go back quite a few years before finding an issue of the Alaskan Caver where the majority, if not all, of the maps didn't have Kevin's and/or Carlene's names on them.

In addition to all of us being proud of Kevin's award, we can also be proud of those people, both Glacier Grotto members and nonmembers,

who joined in on the letter writing that was needed to make this happen. But if you, for whatever reason, were not one of those people, you will still get another chance to participate. Kevin received the award, but Carlene did not. This is because one of the stipulations of the Lew Bicking Award is that it is for an "individual". This means that we must now start planning to complete the recognition that they both rightfully deserve. I will keep everyone posted on when and where the new effort will be directed.

While I'm on the topic of being proud of our Grotto and our members, we now have a great way to legally expose our pride in public. The newly designed (by who else - Carlene Allred) Glacier Grotto T-shirt! The shirts are constructed of heavy, 100% cotton and preshrunk. The design shows an oblique view

of Alaska with four cavers on rope and "Glacier Grotto" written across the top. We currently have adult sizes M, L & XL available. You can pick up a shirt at K.A.V.E. Sports, 615 Stedman St., Ketchikan, AK 99901 (907)225-2283 or at Murray Records and Tapes, 55 Main Street, Ketchikan, AK 99901 (907)225-2500.

The shirts sell for \$16 each. If you want some mailed to you, please send an additional \$3 for shipping and handling for up to three shirts, and \$5 for 4 or more shirts.

Finally, please note that since the overseas postage for The Caver is very expensive, the membership rate for subscribers outside North America will increase by \$4. That means \$19 for a single and \$24 for a family membership. Hopefully this will allow us to break even on mailing expenses.

BIBLIOGRAPHY OF TENNESSEE SPELEOLOGY

Tennessee Cave Survey Bulletin 1, 45th Edition. November 1994, 520 pp.
Printed from The Journal of Spelean History Vol 30 No 3 July-September 1996

Reviewed by Joseph C. Douglas

Larry E. Matthews, a longtime historian with many works to his credit, literally spent years chasing down references to Tennessee caves, and he has now presented them in a highly useful format. This latest edition of his Bibliography of Tennessee Speology is far superior to earlier ones, and it belongs on every speleologist's shelf, right next to the bibliographies of Mammoth Cave and Wyandotte Cave. Matthews has given us a wonderful research tool with an importance that reaches far beyond the borders of a single state.

In this work, Matthews presents three separate indices: x with 2,740 entries, a Cave Index with 2,427 entries, and a Subject Index with 557 different subjects. Thus, one can approach the voluminous literature on

Tennessee cave (and Tennessee has more caves than any other state) from several different angles, depending on the thrust of one's research. The Author Index is especially useful in geographic research, the Cave Index is the place to begin research on a particular cave or case study, and the Subject Index guides the researcher to the literature on special topics, ranging from Accidents to Wooden Ladders in caves.

Of the three indices, the Subject Index may be the weakest, in that Matthews has not always reexamined the older, broader sources and separately indexed each cave reference. But this is a fairly minor criticism, as the broad sources (such as Goodspeed's History of

Tennessee) appear in the Author Index and are generally well-known to many researchers. Despite this criticism, I have found the Subject Index invaluable in my own research on Moonshine caves and fallout shelter caves. The Subject Index is very useful for speleologists engaged in topical research, whether on a local, regional or national level.

While many bibliographies contain works published by large organizations, Matthews includes references from smaller clubs and organizations, including grotto newsletters. This adds immensely to the work's value. He is also quite helpful in tracking down the (sometimes) obscure articles the Bibliography notes. In sum, I highly recommend the book, which is available from the NSS Bookstore, Speleobooks, and Inner Realm Books.

HERRING ROE ON KARST CAVE

Blanquizal Island • Preliminary Report #312

Tongass Cave Project • National Speleological Society

by R.R. Knotts
June 9, 1997

DESCRIPTION:

Herring Roe on Karst Cave was discovered on April 3, 1997, by Rob Knotts and Brad Jurries.

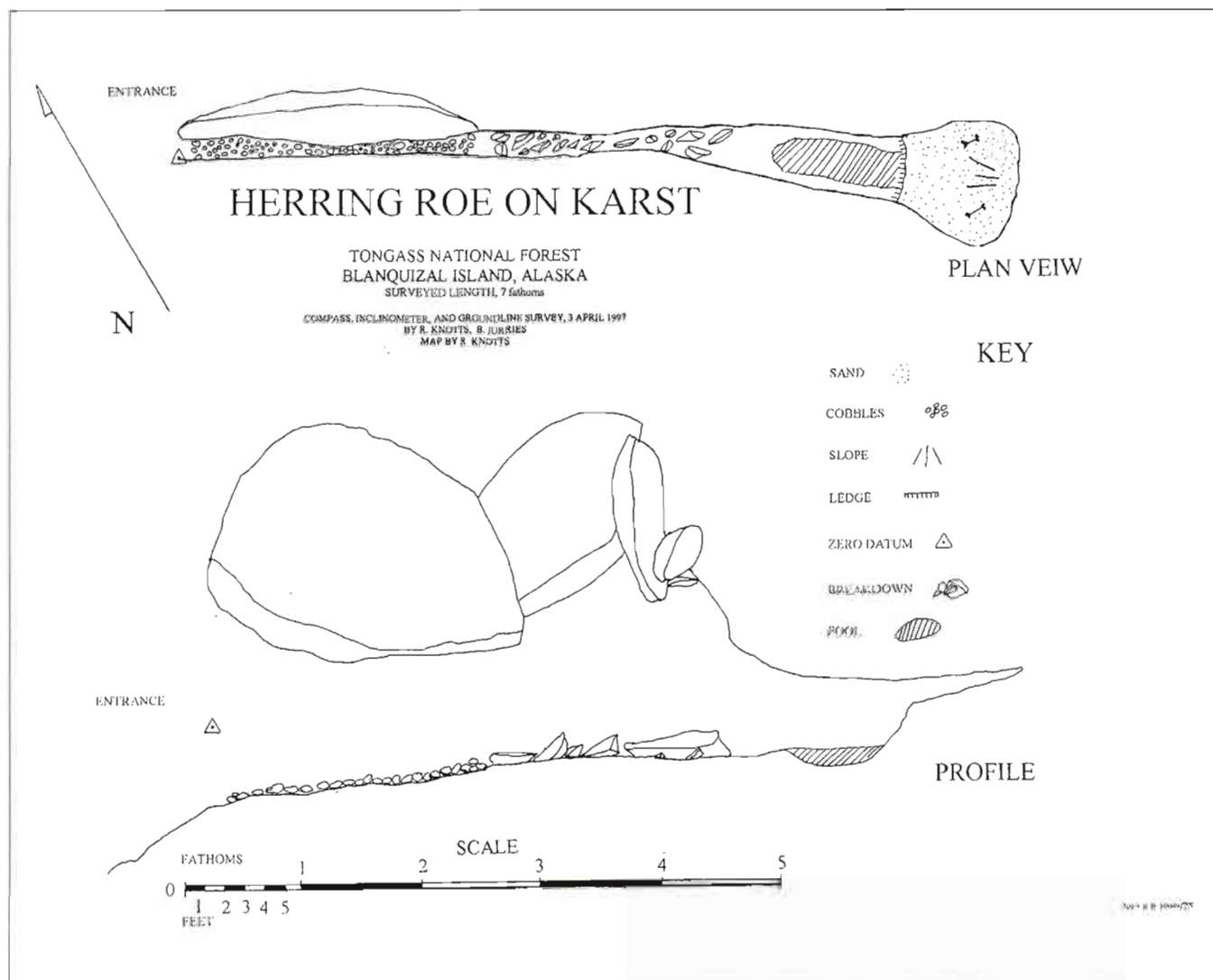
It is a relatively short littoral feature whose single passage is a tall narrow fissure that follows the bedding plane. At high tide all but the furthest recesses of the cave are submerged. At the time of survey herring were spawning in the entrance, and the first few meters of passage hosted several different species of marine invertebrates.

Large amounts of urchin, crab and fish remains in the small dry region of the cave suggest recent otter use.

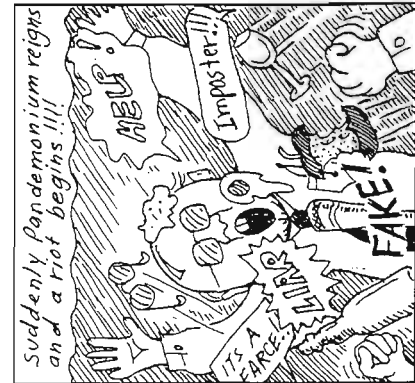
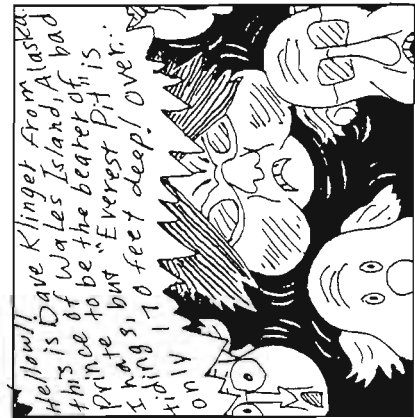
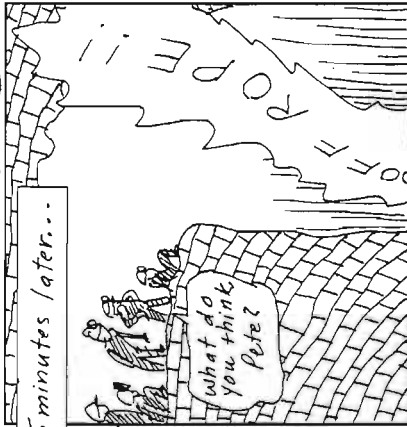
MANAGEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS:

Even though it is a small cave Herring Roe on Karst is extremely active biologically. The kelp beds adjacent the entrance are historical spawning grounds for the herring biomass. Urchins, rock crab, limpets and other marine invertebrates too numerous to mention, have established populations within the twilight region.

Due to its remote nature and the concealing qualities of the grikes surrounding its entrance, it is unlikely that Herring Roe on Karst will be the target of many casual visitors. However, the light of its biological diversity the cave should be given the maximum protective measures allowed by the NCRPA.



THE ADVENTURES OF AVER CAVES by K & C. ALLRED



To be continued...

MISCELLANEOUS

The Glacier Grotto t-shirts have arrived. They are available from either of the two addresses on the Order Form below.

Featuring a drawing by Carlene Allred, the shirts have a map of Alaska with four cavers rappelling into caves that seem to appear through the map. Glacier Grotto is printed above the picture.

All printing is done in black and blue ink (a caver's two favorite colors) on gray 100 %, preshrunk cotton fabric.

The shirts come in Medium, Large, and Extra large sizes. No children's sizes at this time.

Each shirt sells for \$16. Shipping and handling is \$3 for the first three shirts and \$5 for four or more.

Order Form

Please fill out and mail with your check to:

KAVE Sports
615 Stedman Street
Ketchikan, AK 99901

or

Murray Records & Tapes
55 Main Street
Ketchikan, AK 99901

<i>Glacier Grotto T-shirt</i>	<i>Size</i>	<i>Quantity</i>	<i>Cost per unit</i>	<i>Total</i>
<i>T-shirt Total</i>				
<i>Shipping Total</i>				
<i>Grand Total</i>				

The Alaskan Caver

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