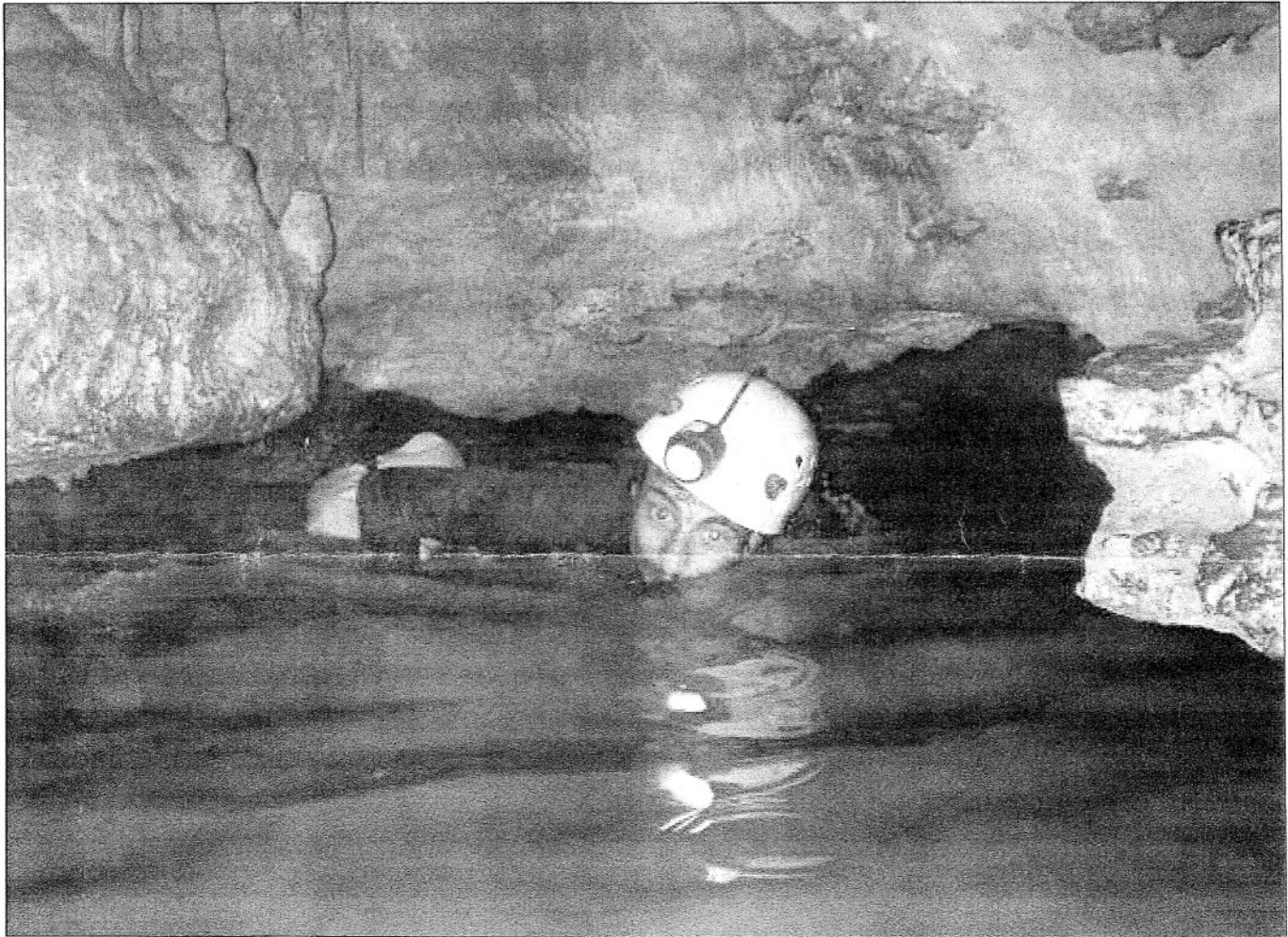


# GADSDEN GROTTA NEWSLETTER

VOL..18 No.4

GADSDEN GROTTA NEWSLETTER

JULY/AUGUST 2005



*The Ear-dipper*

**THE NATIONAL SPELEOLOGICAL SOCIETY**

2813 CAVE AVENUE  
HUNTSVILLE, ALABAMA 35810-4431  
TEL: (256) 852-1300

**GADSDEN GROTTO OF NSS**

P.O. BOX 2092  
E. GADSDEN, ALABAMA 35903

**PRESIDENT:**  
JIM LOFTIN

**Blocked for Internet**

**VICE PRESIDENT:**  
DAVID TEAL

**Blocked for Internet**

**PROGRAMS/PROJECTS:**  
MARK MEDLEN

**Blocked for Internet**

**SECRETARY/TREASURER:**  
SUSAN TEAL

**Blocked for Internet**

**EDITOR:**  
KELLY A. KEENER

**Blocked for Internet**



**Membership Fees:** \$10.00 yearly per person to join. Each Member receives a bi-monthly subscription of the Gadsden Grotto Newsletter.

**Gadsden Grotto Patches:**

\$7.00 each per member  
\$10.00 each per non-member

**Gadsden Grotto Meetings:**

Rainbow City Recreation Center  
4412 Rainbow Drive  
Rainbow City, Alabama 35906

**When:**

Every 2nd Tuesday of each month

**Time:**

6:30p.m.

For more info. Contact President, Jim Loftin.

E-mail: jimloftin@juno.com

*Send your articles, or photos to...*  
k\_keener@bellsouth.net  
Or to...  
Kelly A. Keener

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**FRONT COVER:** MARK MEDLEN, AT EAR DIPPER, SINKING COVE.

**BACK COVER:** SWEET BABY GIRL DOING PULL DOWN IN SINKING COVE CAVE. TENNESSEE.

**Up Coming Events**

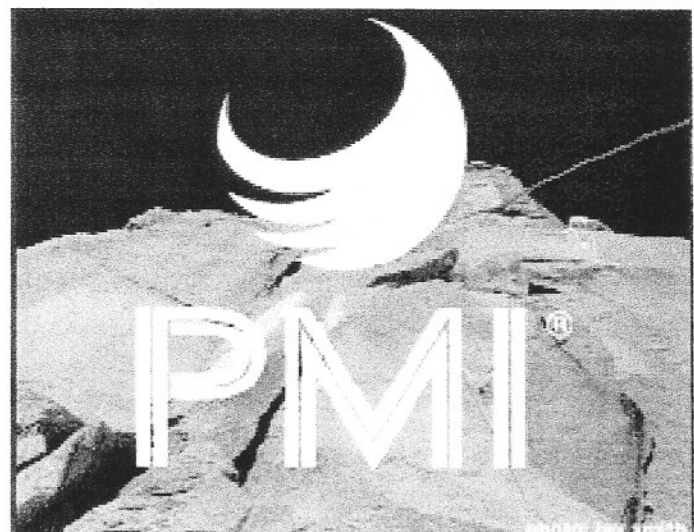
**Wednesday nights,** Gadsden Grotto German-food Get-together at The Sports Nut Bar & Grill. Highway 21 N, Jacksonville, Al. Meet at 6pm. Great food.

Call 256-892-1388 for more details.

**Grotto Caving Trip:** Call Jim Loftin for info.

**Gadsden Grotto Meeting.**

**October 6-9 :2005Tag Fall Cave In**



## *I Don't Remember It Well*

*Written by: Kelly Keener June 18 2005*

We're on the ridge, I'm sitting on a flat rock leaning against a tree. Mark and Jim looking for I Remember It Well. "Hoot, Hoot, Hoot," I hear not far from below the ridge. Is that it? I asked. "No, but it's a hole" Mark replied. Jim walks back across the ridge. "Bring a rock" he said, "this one is big enough to fit in." So we hike down the ridge. "Tight but we can do it. Big rock in the hole." Mark and Jim does not know if this is a pit or not. They grab the webbing and they pulled the big rock out of the hole. The Gadsden Grotto finds another horror hole. "This is J hole #1" Mark replied, Jim checking it out to see if we need rope. I hear Jim, "If I fall, I won't fall too far." I hear birds singing in the background, leaves and trees swaying in the pleasant wind. Shhh!!! "Looks pretty climbable to me" Jim says, Mark disappears like Houdini. My complaints... We go to look for and drop I Remember It Well, but we end up finding holes instead. Do they remember it well? There's Mark and Jim grunting their way out of the hole. Dusting the dirt off their clothes. "It does go". A Grand Daddy spider crawls across my hand. Let's take a break and eat lunch. We're at good contact layer. We'll search again, a lot of holes here. Jim has ROLOS want a piece? He hands Mark a piece of candy while discussing about the cave locations, getting our packs together. Darned Ravines. Hoot, Hoot, Hoot. Looks like a 38'ft. pit. "We're going to do it because this might be the only one we find", Jim replies. We are rigging the rope. Put your harness on Kelly, Mark replied with a cheerful voice. Jim called me a Writing Mad Girl. While writing at this present moment. "That I am" I replied back. Jim goes down, then Mark, and I go next. "ON ROPE" Jim and Mark takes photos of me going up. I climbed doing the Texas System up this pit. Good workout. Mark is up, Jim is up, and I'm ready to go to the next hole in the ground. Pack up my things and to the next pit? Mark looks over at me and says "Honey Pie" are you ready. Jim finds another pit. He thinks it Might be off the survey. We'll see, Jim back down and then up at top. Time to coil the rope. They found tape with x's on it. Dud hole. We follow the 4x4 trail, and we walk up to a sink location. No flagging around this one. Mark wanders around looking for the big one. Jim walks Up, "It has more ferns." he says. Well, we're on a good level. Skip this one, let's find our destination pit. WE ARE TOUR GUIDE PRONE. A quick thought crossing my mind. Mark walks up "well it's a sucky day." I requested to tote the rope again. We still have not found it. Dang it! Yawn, yawn, "Tisk Tisk" No luck today. Going down the mountain. Bang! Bang! Bang! Bang! Bang! I heard down in the valley. Crossed a bridge and there was a man with a 38 in his hand and with his little girl no older that 6 or 7 was hurdled behind him and his wife standing inside the door of their White Suburban. He shot that gun just before we got to the bottom of the mountain. Man from the Hunting Club. Cont'>>>>

Cont' from page 18... I Don't Remember It Well

I spoke kindly to the man with the gun, telling him how good it felt being surrounded by tall mountains, us standing in the valley. The man said that place used to be a n old Indian Reservation. How cool can that get. The man was not all that friendly but I treated him with kindness. He gathered his family back into his truck and left. The man built that bridge so the 4 wheelers can cross the creek. We are at our trucks and we're sitting by the creek side. Slightly flowing waters and cool breezes dries the sweat blowing though my hair. Black dragon flies chasing each other. I am enjoying the sun shining down in between the leaves rattling in the trees. Mark dipping his feet and hands in the creek, and to cool off his face. Jim following the same pattern. Sounds good to me. I'll be a copy cat. Back to the truck to change into clean clothes. "We'll find it next time I'm telling ya!" Back on the old bumpy muddy road to "RUTTVILLE" Mud puddles are swallowing my truck. Mark asked Jim " Have you ever took a photo of I Remember It Well? Jim was laughing and crying sounding at the same time in a comical way and said "That's Why We Have not found it yet!!!" We are driving on paved road and discovered there is squash everywhere, all over the road, in the ditches. Follow the yellow squash road. Just about every 2 or 3 miles are more scattered squash all over the place, colors of green and yellow. I am surrounded by the Cumberland Plateau. "Jackson County Mountains." Sun hits on them really good Living East— out here will be rather nice. Different shades of green. Good place to find more holes. Mountain is full of them. Gonna find a new project called Jackson County Cave Chronicles. Caves we have searched hard for and could not find. Try, try again. Ahh!! FOOD!!! We're far from that at this present time, but we're getting closer to town . There is a worn down house on Hgy. 117 would make a good TAG house in Stevenson. Jim waving at an old man, and he waived back. This town must be some what friendly. Mark and I are looking for land some where around this area. It has a new Mexican restaurant. We're crossing over Hgy.72 a man in his gold truck will not stop at the intersection. Crossing over big metal bridge going over Tennessee River. Rainbow Creek Turning down Coon Gulf Road #2 for sale #4 for sale # we got the number. Good place just to place a mobile home until we build a house. Caveville 4x4 City and the Tennessee River? "A Cavers dream if I ever did see one!!!" Waffle House here we come. I've been to the mountains with a cove with no name it feels good to get out of the rain. In the mountains you can't remember their names cause there ain't none to find but it gives you the pain. Na Na Na nanananana Na Na Na Na. We're Home again. Maybe next time... I'll Remember It Well.

**The End**

## **Fern Cave Trip**

**Report by: Sharon Brewer**

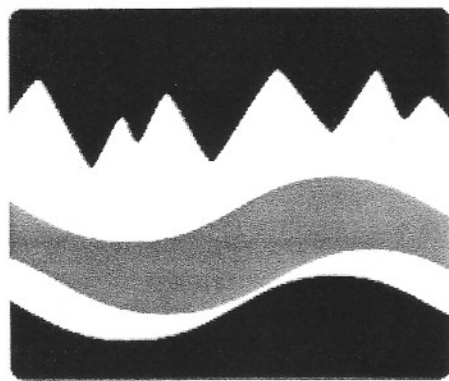
Saturday, July 9, 2005, after meeting at the Highway 72 turnoff, meeting new friends, and organizing into groups, we headed into the Surprise Entrance of Fern Cave.

We traveled about two hours, making sure to have our usual argument about being on time, wondering if we would make it, and then finally arriving right at 9 a.m., which was the time appointed.

We stood around meeting new faces which now the names escape me. Guy, Holly, ... Oh why wasn't I taking notes. There were quite a few people already there and the crowd continued to grow until about 9:45. Peter and Ann Bostitch showed up to take a photo trip into Helectite Heaven. Kelly Norwood, Pat, the famed cartographer, and so many more were there. Of all the people, we only knew two of them previously. We met Kenny Chandler and decided to go on a shorter trip with him to check out Surprise Pit. It was more relaxing and all the organizing was getting on my nerves.

Even though it was not my responsibility to organize the trips, I felt out of joint with so many new faces, everyone pairing into groups, and deciding on their teams ahead of the leader. After meeting Kenny and hearing of his plans we talked with Steve Pitts to get a feel for what really was needed. I think Steve Pitts was overwhelmed with the response. I would guess there were about 35-40 people to organize into survey parties. We counted 19 cars on the way out. His biggest need was for sketchers. Although we can sketch, if we have to, we are as slow as Christmas, so we didn't feel as if we were abandoning him.

Kenny, Steve Brewer and I hiked up with the photography team. They got changed and ready at the Johnson Entrance. Plans were to go to Helectite Heaven and photograph it. They entered a little after 12 noon.



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**MUTT SURVEY CAMP OUT****SATURDAY, JUNE 4 2005****WRITTEN BY: KELLY A. KEENER**

I decided that it may be easier to write a newsletter article as I write my journal. In stead of writing a story I kind of wrote it maybe as poetry or you may call it plain ole gibberish. I more or less call it my Kelly Keener Cave Chronicles. Any way here is how our camping weekend went at Mutt.

We're here at the camp 11:50 a.m. sitting around checking out the area, looking for a nice place settle. Mark scraping away rocks and debris to place our tent, while I gathered rocks to make a small camp fire to light the night. We are eating lunch before we go down to the Mutt. Slightly sprinkling at this time. We just realized we were out of (Kraft) Zesty Italian Dressing for our salad tonight, so I called Mike Davis to bring us a bottle. Jim is eating a ham, cheese, and lettuce sandwich, and Mark and I had Ham and Cheese Lunchables. Suicidal Eye Bombing Knats are flying around us. Jim calls them kami-kaze Flies

Suddenly I hear it raining. We move quickly under the tarp to finish lunch. I nearly fell backward in my new rocking chair but it just leans back really far. It's really a good thing to have in the woods. We decided to take photos of the Mutt. I have a messed up duo light. Wire has a short that goes

into the lamp. I use clay to tape my wire to my helmet, and It Works really well.

1:10 p.m. Jim goes down the pit, removes rocks and debris away from the walls and such of the 72'ft. pit. While waiting inside the entrance, I decided to go ahead and put my capeline top on. The entrance of the pit has washed out a little. A little aggressive Salamander, black, with spots that Mark moved out of harms way. I go down the pit next, I'm down. Off Rope and I take off my vertical gear. Here comes Mark. We leave our vertical gear at the bottom of the pit entrance. We are photo shooting through the climb down.

*Gadsden Grotto**Gadsden Grotto**Gadsden Grotto**Gadsden Grotto*

Rocks are spattering clanging of Jims tripod against the wall. Mark banging a tune on the pokemon rock with all his might. It's a hard sandstone rock. Mark holds out hammer and Jim gives it a try. Grunting as he fiercely beats on the rock. Mark says "Hit it on the other side." Jim says "we need a chisel." Mark said Blast it with a straw, then he said Beat the Sh\_\_ out of it. J Jim banging on the pokemon. I It broke! Jim freaking out, It broke. And the dreaded Pokemon got blocked! That move. They try to pry the rock with a 10' ft. stick, this "C@#K - \$#@%&R needs to move." speaking with much aggravation. They try to pry the rock with Marks 10'ft. primitive pole. No Go, the pokemon blocked the passage. Not giving up yet. Mark and Jim working as a team. Finally the Pokemon gave up and dropped down the hole. Mark is moving boulders and I can now see a clear void. Mark and his primitive lever. Taking a short break and let the sweat dry off from hammering. We began looking around. Jim re-rigs the rope to the climb down. "Peeuuuhhhh!!!!" Mark replies, the whiff methane aroma reeks up the passage and blew over me, and up his nose. My Petzl Duo wire shorts out on me, and no way to repair it.

**Continues on next page>>**

## MUTT SURVEY CAMPOUT CONTINUED

Using mud for duct tape is a pretty good way to hold your wire onto your helmet. Jim is setting up his tripod. Photo shoots taken at this time. As we pack it up, and chimney down the wide borehole, hardly an echo in this passage, Mark and I gets out the bulbs and flashes. Mark looses his new gloves. First time on this trip. Jim hands us more flashes and we get ready for the shooting. Mark and I then chimneys across the "scoot on your bum type traverse" to use the flashes. 1 picture, 2 pictures, 3 pictures. Done Mark tries our digital camera with Jim's flash. Mark says "Stay right there, I'm going to take a couple of action shots." So I'm staying here Still waiting. FIRE!!! Now lets go the other direction. Mark goes back to the table rock, he's gone to look for his gloves that dropped down the canyon. Let's go the other way Jim replies. Here we go turning around heading the opposite

direction. I am chimneying across the what I so called the black canyon abyss, and up to the recently opened Pokemon Highway, as Mark calls it. Kelly U coming? Mark asks me, so back we go toward to rope. Jim set up tripod again and hands me the flash. Got a couple of good one of Mark

"on rope." I climbed up and banged the crap out of my knee. One of those you call a knee banger.

We're up at top now. Outside, Hot, bugs, only cool air from the entrance. We decided to leave our packs inside the cave for tomorrows survey. We walked up the mountain all emptied handed felt good to not carry extra weight. Taking short break to grab our breath. Before we head up hill and over the bluff. Mark lost his watch somewhere outside the cave. Still getting bit by them bugs. Up the mountain we go and to the camp.

Saturday evening, we're back at the camp. I hear Jim asks Has Mike shown up yet? Just as we were walking around the corner there was Mike and Heather. I am sitting in the back of Mark's jeep my feet elevated listening to the wind, faint voices, white rap, and acorns falling on the roof of our vehicles. Let's follow the yellow brick road.

Cave conversations about the future... tomorrow... tomorrow, we'll survey further. I'm getting a little sleepy. Bout time for me to turn in. Good camp site it is. No 4x4's yet? Kind of strange. We're used to hearing them ride at night. A 4wheel trail camping on it. Cars in the road. It's dark for I can not see. Cookies in the truck. Boys U hungry. Sitting by the fire in my rocking chair. Good chocolate chip cookies. Quietness!!! Ahhh!!! Car cranked up to charge battery. Ice sloshing from ice chest in the background.  
**Continues next page>>**

### Cave Poem

#### **Ha Ha, Ho Ho, Hee Hee !!!**

I'm going into the cave ha ha.

I'm going into the cave ha ha ho ho hee hee  
I'll slip into darkness where it's hard to see.

I'm through the passage that's tight ha ha  
I'm through the passage that's tight ha ha  
ho ho hee hee grunting and growling  
through this long squeeze.

I'm repelling down this pit ha ha

I'm repelling down this pit ha ha ho ho hee hee,  
Here at the bottom is where I'll be.

I'm climbing back to the top ha  
I'm climbing back to the top ha ha ho ho hee hee  
back in the daylight surrounding me.

**Writtin By: Kelly A. Keener**

## MUTT CANYON CAMP OUT AND SURVEY TRIP... CONTINUED

"JIMBO" Mike yells out. The towers are flashing on and off. UFO's up here? Were atop the mountain, and I see the city lights.

Faint voices I hear in the dark. I'm not drinking no more. I'll f@rt on you. Good nite says Jim, What time is it. It's staggering rootin-tootin caver boy. Alcohol abuse. In the tent by 11:30pm. When we got the tents ready we saw 2 scorpions.

"CAMP SCORPION" Let them go and they may respect you for leaving them be. I say. Taking my contacts out, I hear the sounds of Jim brushing his teeth in the distance. SLOSHES, KUSPUT, and out spits his mouthwash Kelly, Mark says, What are you doing? I said I writing in my log book. I call it the Kelly Keener Kave Kronicles. I'm settling in now good night Jimbo, Mark Boy, Mike Bob, Heather Sue, and Kelly Mae.

Good nite Ya'll.

### >>>The Mutt Survey cont'

**Sunday 6-5-05** I

Woke up this morning some what cranky. The kind of that no one talks to me until I've had my coffee, type of crankiness. After coffee, I had to take aspirin for my sinus head ache. The great smell of pollen. My back was sore from sleeping on the rocks. Ate breakfast ,and off we go climbing down the bluff and hiking down the steep moun-

tain. A Squirrel platform. (Cut down tree with crushed up acorns.) we passed on the way to the cave.

Jim down, Mike down, Me down, Mark down. Dripping with sweat. It feels so good being down in a hole in the ground . Survey time. Using chalk makes a good marker for survey points, except it melts rather quickly.

Laser light straight ahead. It's the red light district shining on point. Mark says re label 5.3. In next passage blinking star light makes good shots for altimeter. Mike says," Here is the measuring tape." The point went all the way to the Table Rock. That's cool we can have lunch here.

Mark, Jim, and Mike goes to retrieve Mark's glove he lost yesterday.

As I sit here waiting on the guys, I examine the crystalline canyon, mainly on the left side of the canyon passage. On the right were Popcorn forming on the wall. Narrow walking cannoning passage. Voices sounds closer and closer. I turn off my headlamp to hear the sounds of the cave. I see a light beaming above me, and clanging of a rack. Mark is busting through cat claw heaven. Never -never land don't go.

He's looking down at me. He's coming back. As I sit here waiting patiently.

We're crossing the intimidation Passage. Don't let go of the other side of the wall. My monkey made me do it.

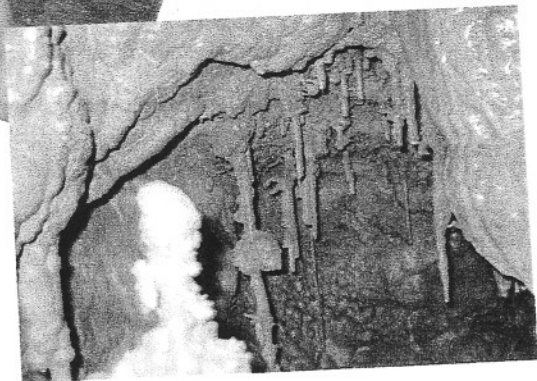
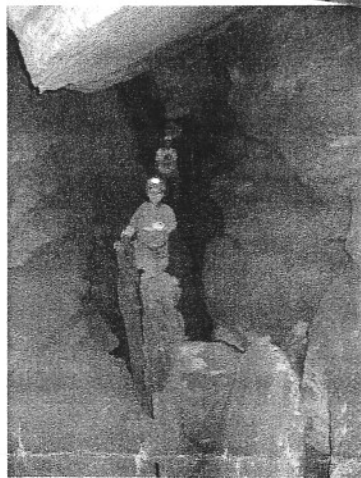
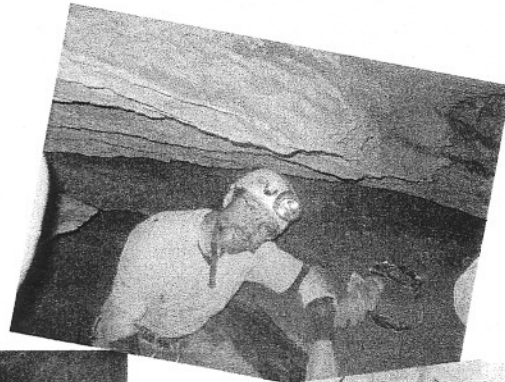
Release the evil. I start to laugh, Making it harder for me to challenge the wide canyon. Once my hand was secured on the other wall and my heart beat slowed down a little, I was good to go. Were back in the red clay of muck, my feet are stuck, "Where to chickaboom?" Mike asks. Across another canyon It's not so spooky but I am straddling between two narrow walls like a crouching tiger. Mark took some photo shots of me and Mike crossing the canyon. We are the "Action Figure Cavers. #9.1 got a flag? Stalag-tites drop. Downward Spiral. through the grunt hole. I'm next. Down I go freestyle I don't need rope but it's like squeezing out of Mother Earth's Intestine. That's why we call It the Poot Shoot. Here comes Mike, then Mark. I am waiting patiently, the surroundings are quiet and trickily from the drips of water. Mark examines the walls. He reaches to feel the other side of the wall. Mark begins to write in his survey book. I hand Mike the blinking light again so Jim can measure the azimuth and bearing. Dirt sprinkles down my cave suit. Back up the Poot Shoot again. It's much harder to climb up then slide down, Now were heading back through the canyon, up the climb downs, on rope and back into daylight. 6 hours of survey today.



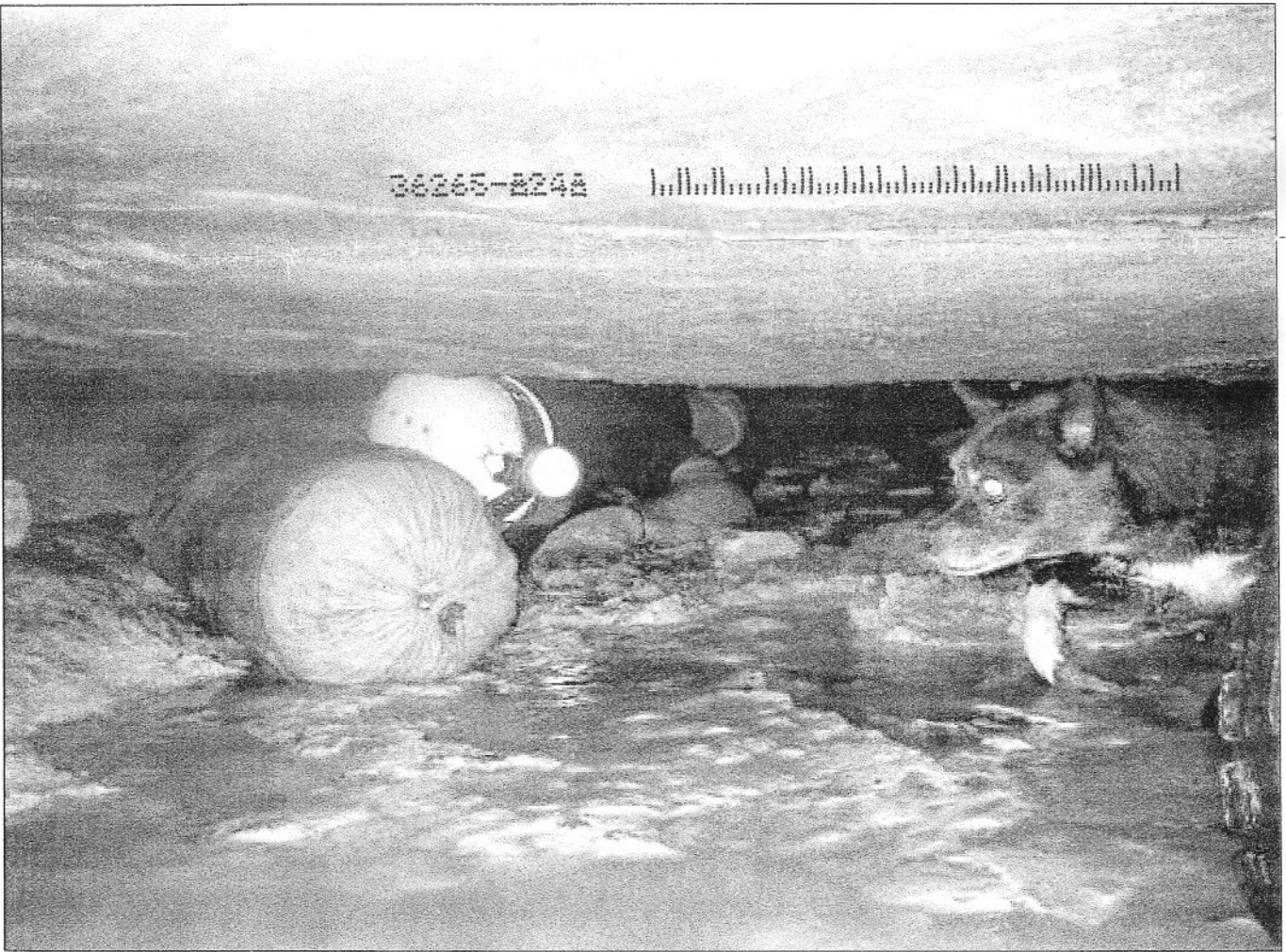
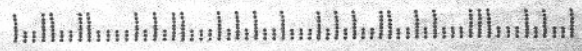
## Mutt Survey Continue

We did pretty good. I feel worn and wretched. Back up the steep mountain, climbed up the bluff, made it to the 4 wheel trail and back at our CAMP with an ice cold Milo's Sweet Tea just waiting for me to drink. It's hot as Hades at 6:30pm. Shorts and A tank top. A good news bee hovers over to greet me BZZZZZZZZ !!! Does he like the rope or my orange T-shirt? He likes the rope. Caver Bee. Good news to us. Is that a good sign, that maybe we have new passage that we haven't yet explored. We are resting, cold coca-cola, and Prinles. We packed our camp gear and left to go home. We had one heck of a time this weekend.

**The End**



38265-8248



**Baby Girl says, "Watch your head!!!"**