

# GADSDEN GROTTO NEWSLETTER

VOL.17 NO.3

GADSDEN GROTTO NEWSLETTER

MAY/JUNE 2005



THE FUTURE GENERATION



**THE NATIONAL SPELEOLOGICAL SOCIETY**

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**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\_kenner@bellsouth.net

Or to...

Kelly A. Keener

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**FRONT COVER:** HALEY DAVIS HER FIRST REPEL. ZUBER QUARRY. (PHOTO BY: KELLY A. KEENER)

**BACK COVER:**

**Up Coming Events**

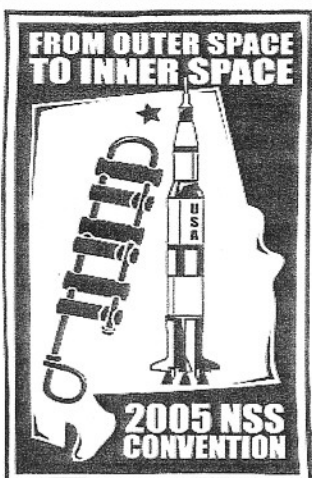
**G.G.G.G Wednesday nights, Gadsden Grotto German-food Get-together at The Sports Nut Bar & Grill. Highway 21 N, Jacksonville, Al. Meet at 6pm. Great food.**

Call 256-892-1388 for more details.

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

**June 14: Gadsden Grotto Meeting.**

**July 4th : NSS Convention in Huntsville Al.**



## ACS Annual Meeting

April 16, 2005

By: Jim Loftin

I didn't know what to expect as to people showing up for the Annual Alabama Cave Survey Meeting this year, because there had been no reminder cards sent out and David Teal had posted the time and place on tag-net twice. That had been the only announcements made for the meeting. Like it were 20 or so showed up. An ok turn out. I was really shocked to learn only 13 new caves have been turned in and 16 new maps turned in, of which "our" cartographer Mark Medlen turned in 6. I suppose the older cavers are slowing down a lot and the younger cavers aren't ridge walking much, or just not turning in any of their finds. Or maybe there's just a lot more work going on in Tennessee and Georgia.

We had a good discussion on cave locations as stated in the ACS printout and why so many of them are incorrect. Thanks, Steve, for bringing it up. Alan Cressler had some helpful things to say. It was his opinion that a lot of people don't know how to properly use a GPS; therefore, they are submitting to the ACS wrong location data, particularly latitude-longitude and elevation. According to Alan, who works for the USGS in Atlanta, elevation readings on GPS's are never reliable. For how we use GPS's, we need to base their datum on NAD-27. GPS's can default to the datum WGS-84, which would throw the whole thing off. A cave location could be as much as 500' off. How these GPS people are converting their cave locations to the older grid system, I would like to know. I do know how frustrating it is to mark a new turn-in on my paper topo, by the grid system; and when I look at the elevation of this cave, it is an elevation that is not even close by. That somewhat explains why the newer turn-in's can be off. It would help if they would turn in the cave location from the edges of the paper topo like the ACS form asks for. That would give us 3 location systems to go by and if the stated elevation is still way off, then we have to determine which info might be off.

What about the older turn-in's? Why are some of them so wrong and some of them are right on? Possibly some of the older turn-in's were turned in with location data marked from the older 15 minute quadrangle maps. These are far less detailed maps than the newer 7 1/2 minute quadrangle maps which, I didn't realize, came out in the 1970's. According to the ACS Director Jim Hall and to past ACS board member David Teal, the ACS location data, based on the grid system only, sometime in the past was converted to latitude-longitude and then was converted back, which insinuates that the data's accuracy was compromised. However, it was also stated that the location data for every years' printout was based on the original grid system; and that has been handed out to the ACS membership every year at the meetings. There should be some other people out there that could clear a little more of this up.

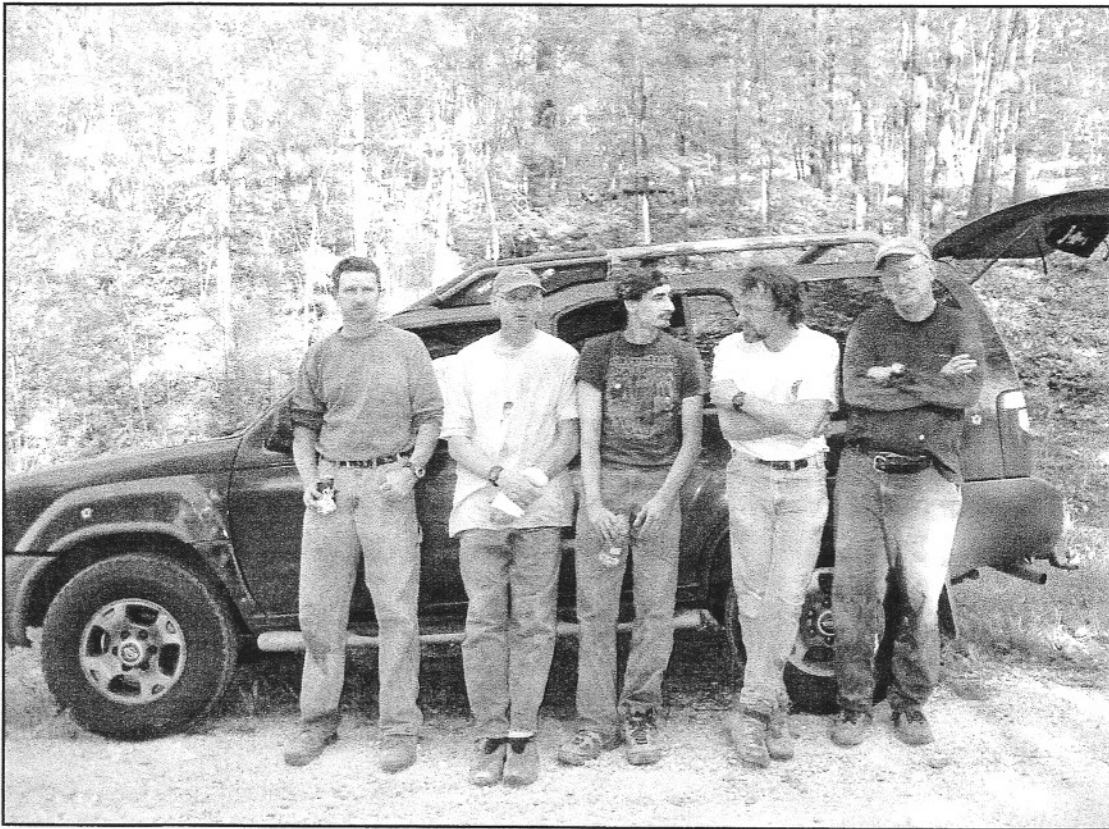
Then there's that secrecy thing that some people intentionally turn in wrong information to protect the cave, or keep their little secret to themselves, or downplay a really good find to a so-so find so that they would have more time to survey-explore their find before someone else scoops it without surveying it and/or turns it in as their find. I suppose, but I sure hope not, that some people may make up info just to add to their numbers of turn-in's so that they can win the ridge walking award that the ACS used to present each year to the caver with the most turn-in's for the previous year.



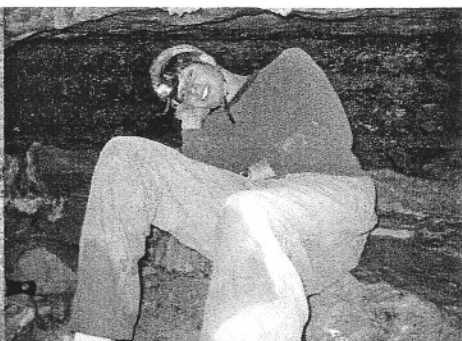
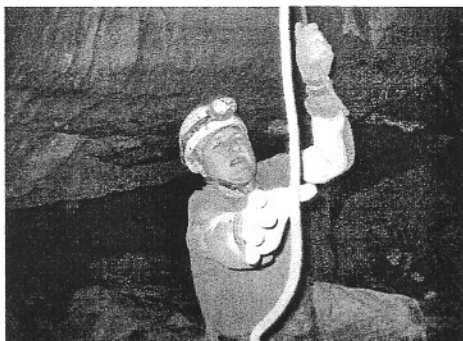
**CONT' FROM PAGE 8**

That's been mostly Jerry Reaves and Bobby Dodson and I. I don't think they would do that, would they? Nah! In conclusion, it was suggested that we learn how to set and use the GPS properly, go out and field check some of the caves that we find are mislocated, if we can find them, and turn in to the ACS corrections for those caves. But how would you know a mislocated cave is a certain cave that's supposed to be 500' away and not a new one? We would have to check the map first, if there is one in the ACS, and then the internal data, horizontal footage and vertical footage, for this cave. If it all matches up, then we know this particular cave is mislocated. If the map looks like another cave and the internal data does not match what you found, t

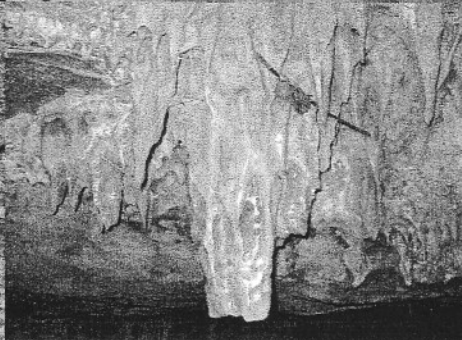
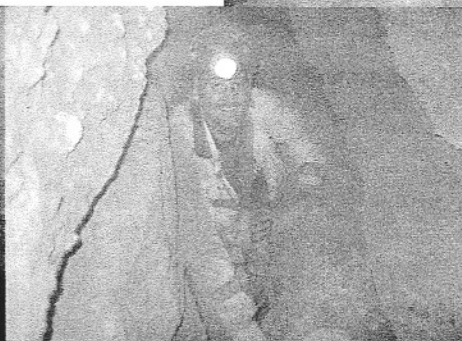
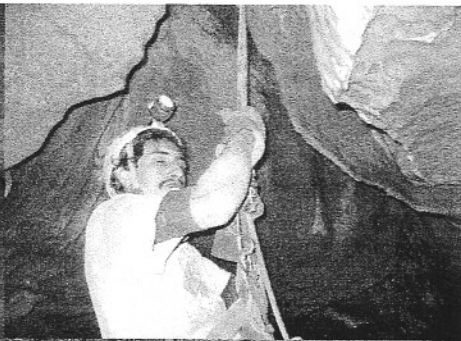
Then you have a new cave. This is the best we can do, I suppose. If we can't find any new caves in Alabama, maybe we need to go back and correct the ACS. This will keep us busy for quite a while by the number of caves that seem to be marked wrong. Then there's another element that I haven't mentioned and that is it's very hard to tell exactly where you are on a paper topo sometimes. That is very important. Take a compass and a paper topo into the field with you often and get used to using them and reading those little lines. Those lines aren't always so accurate either. But then everybody is using GPS's these days? They need to be able to read a paper topo first or the GPS is only good for finding your way back at some other time. Good luck! If anyone else has any enlightening contribution to this article, please let me know.



Left to Right : John Matthews, Alan Cressler, Mark Medlen, Jim Loftin, and Jerry (The Rockeater) Reeves at Green Valley Cave.



# GADSDEN GROTTO TRIP REPORTS





## PIT BOUNCING ON FOX MOUNTAIN

WRITTEN BY: KELLY A. KEENER (5-28-05)

Jim Loftin pulls in our driveway at 8:00 am to go with Mark, Sadie and I to Fox Mountain. Sadie wanted more "On Rope!" experience so we figured there were plenty of holes for her to practice in. Sadie wants to get enough experience to repel down Neversink, and ascend the deep giant pit. We arrived there, and Jim got out to unlocked the gate. We drove through and parked where we usually camp( In the Shade). We Noticed someone put a tub the Called the Fairfield Spa there. We thought the spa tub was pretty cool. We hiked up the mountain which gave her the experience, and knowledge of her having to tote the rope and appreciate the good hike to get to some of the best pits in TAG

We first took her to Sloopy's Double Drop, good for be-

ginners, and she did very well.

After we all dropped the pit, we hiked on over the hill to Mystic Well.

Jim went first to belay Sadie repelling down. Jim then came up (to let Sadie get used to being down in pit by herself.) then Mark went down. Sadie climbed

up. Then Mark. I repelled down and went back up. Mark and Jim repelled one more time while I stayed up top with Sadie. She did really well, needs more experience going over and climbing over the the top of the pit.

she was in "Cell Phone World" in the middle of the wilderness calling and telling her friends that she was getting ready to repel off into a hole in the ground. That proves that she was having a good time.



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# On Rope III

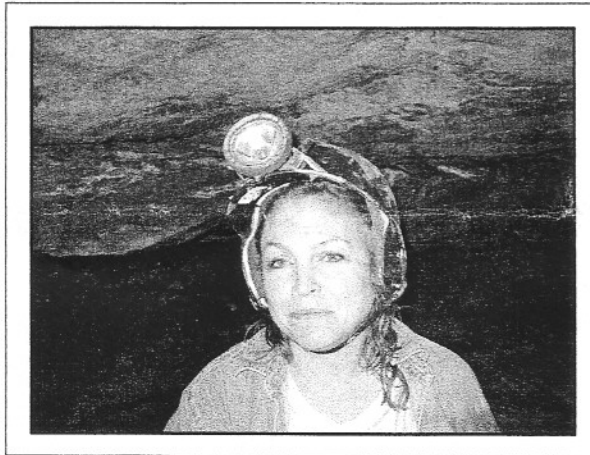
## I AM THE NEW CAVER

WRITTEN BY: BETH DUNN (MAY 2005)

I am the new caver. Fledgling member of the Gadsden Grotto. Britches on fire to take off and explore exciting new frontiers. So we're going on a caving trip! Alright, I can't wait. Kennammer Cave here I come.

The morning of the trip is heralded in with the EMS weather sirens going off. It is pouring rain, thundering and lightening. Who cares, we are going caving. With all the excitement of my first trip with the grotto there were several things I left back at the house, thank heavens for Wal-Mart. I will mention here that little league batting helmets do not make good caveing helmets and duct tape is definitely the best thing ever invented.

We were in that cave for I know DAYS not hours. We climbed, crawled, slithered, shimmied - you name it, we did it. We dropped 35' on rope and made our way thru methane slush. We finally got to



Beth Dunn on grotto trip to Kennemer Cave. (Photo By: Kelly A. Keener)

where the exit was but somebody moved it, soooo guess what? Back the way we came. That rope got longer and longer on the way up. My arms and legs told me, "Lady you crazy". I was soaked and cold and could not remember ever being that tired.

When we finally got back to where we started it was already well after dark. I was never so glad to see poison ivy or smell fresh air. The muscles in my legs were playing some sort of tune, I do think it was the theme from "Deliverance". Was it worth all that? My body was bruised but my spirit was refreshed. The cave was awesomely beautiful and I have new friends (thanks to all of you for pushing and pulling). I am a Caver and I will be back..

# "Gadsden Grotto Memories" 2005 Sera Cave Carnival !!!!!





## 2005 SERA CAVE CARNIVAL

The Birmingham Grotto did a good job. On Thursday May 12, 2005, Sadie, Mark, and I had finished packing up his pop camper to go to the 2005 Sera Cave Carnival. It was being held by the Birmingham Grotto at Camp Comer Boy Scout Camp near De Soto State Park. We arrived there just about the same time Jim Loftin did. We pulled up to the register around 4pm, signed in and went looking for a good place to camp. We drove by a nice lake where there were several canoes, kayaks and swimming. We drove further on down the narrow one way dirt road and followed the signs. Right before dark, we finally found a to camp called the "Black Bear" Camp Site. Rockeater, cavers from Central Alabama Grotto, and from North Carolina were our camping neighbors. Across the road from us were part of the Birmingham Grotto members. Not much was happening Friday, mostly cavers pulling in to find a camping spot. We walked around the venders row and introduced Sadie to a lot of cavers

we knew. Most of them Sadie knew already. She met up with several friends she met during the TAG clean-up last year at the new site, and she hung out with them for a little while.

It's another good day at SERA.

### Friday, May 13

The sky was cloudy all day, but it didn't bother me. Later that evening, Beth pulled up into camp. Not long after that Michael Ray drove up in his new Dodge Ram. Then Anthony Cline, Becky Noah and Richard Wooten pulled up and began to set up their camp. We had a quite a big group of cavers from the Gadsden Grotto.

We sat around the camp and talked about buying caving gear.

We ended up at the Vender's Row where new members of the grotto bought caving gear. It's time for the Banquet. Jim, Michael Ray, Me, and Mark.

Great friends great food, Great 3-D slide show... Can't beat that!!! Back to the camp with our bellies full.

### Saturday May 14

I woke up and got a "BIG" hot tasty cup of coffee. I'm the kind of folks that "No one talks to until after I've had my coffee." Fog-lifter.

I went to the Jewelry Vender that had really cool stuff, I went and bought Sadie the Crystal Head Band that she wanted when she went the day before. Her face glowed when I handed it to her. Later that day we repelled off the climbing tower. It was quicker climbing the rope than it was to climb the steep stairs.

It started to get dark and was time for the door prizes to begin. Sadie kept checking in from time to time letting us know that she was ok. I knew she was in good hands hanging out with the Birmingham Grotto. I want to say "Thanks" to whoever it was who let Sadie borrow their sleeping bag when it was cold Saturday night.