

Articles:

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A synopsis of what is going on in the world of the Near Normal...

White Nose Syndrome Marches On

White Nose Syndrome effects continue with the extension of cave closures in Tennessee and new closures in Ohio and Michigan.

The Center for Biological Diversity has initiated lawsuits to sue the Department of Interior for not granting endangered status to bats. They have also petitioned to close all 'bat' caves on Federal,

State, AND private landowner jurisdiction. These are tough times indeed for cavers, as evident by the dearth of trip reports. There are very few caves open, primarily private caves and notably several Indiana Karst Conservancy caves. Even state and federally owned pits that obviously have no bat populations are closed under the blanket closures.

June Minutes

Near Normal Grotto
Minutes of the meeting June 11, 2010

Present: Ralph Sawyer, George Mattson, Gerry Woltering, Bill Roth, L. J. Tognetti

L. J. Tognetti called the meeting to order.

Treasurer Dave Carson called Ralph Sawyer before the meeting to relay an unofficial treasurer's report. We have a balance of approximately 550.00 in the treasury.

Minutes of the May meeting were examined and approved.

Trip Reports

L. J. and Andrea Tognetti attended the National Cave Rescue Commission (NCRC) weeklong training in Mentone Alabama. L. J. helped instruct level 1 and 2 field operations. Andrea attended Level 1 training. NCRC is not a rescue squad, but a commission to train rescue personnel. The training was climaxed with a large mock rescue.

L. J. has been contemplating organizing two weekends of Orientation to Cave Rescue in Missouri. This version of Orientation to Cave Rescue would deal with small party rescue techniques.

June Minutes - continued



Formations in Sullivan Cave
Photo – Ralph Sawyer

Went caving? Let us know and send in a short trip report!!!



Formations in Sullivan Cave
Photo – Ralph Sawyer

Following NCRC was a trip to Mystery Falls Cave. The waterfall at the top of the 280' pit can be dammed up temporarily. The released water can give those on rope a rush.

Old Business

This Sunday at 1:00 is Vertical Practice at ISU's rappelling tower.

Todd McCartney is heading up a trip to Bluesprings Cave in Tennessee.

Missouri masochist trip weekend of July 24. Hauling gear for scuba divers.*

August 15 Near Normal Grotto Vertical Training at ISU's rappelling tower.

Ellison Cave crossover trip may be same weekend as

vertical...

September 26 NNG annual picnic

New Business

Weekend of September 18 is reserved for a moderate trip to Sullivan Cave, Bedford, Indiana.

Meeting adjourned, followed by familiarization with vertical equipment.

*Since the meeting, the date of this activity has been changed. July 17 is moving equipment and surveying in Crevice Cave (no cave divers present). August 28 in Mertz Cave, divers will attempt to connect Mertz with Crevice. Divers need help carrying equipment. Neither trip is for the beginning caver.

A Trip to Sullivan Cave *by* Bill Morrow

I woke up at 5 am Sunday and managed to pour Nick into the car at 5:30am. My goal was to meet Ralph, Todd, and Laura at Sullivan for a day of caving. The day before they had dropped a hard pit, Smith's Blowhole. They suggested that they'd be happy to do a more moderate cave trip at Sullivan with Nick and myself.

Although Nick just turned 9, this was his fourth trip into Sullivan, and I am comfortable with what he can do. We decided to do a circle route, which consisted of taking the Grand Canyon passage to the Popcorn Crawl, dropping down into the Sorry Room and the Sullivan River, and eventually climbing up into the Mountain Room. The Popcorn Crawl is not typical Sullivan passage, in that it actually has speleothems. The Popcorn Crawl is also not what I'd call a great beginners passage, meaning that there actually are some moderately tough spots and featured floor that can rub your elbows raw. The crawl eventually ends in a notably cooler breakdown area in which one eventually

finds a hole dropping down in a pinball style passage into the Sullivan River. Some strategic spotting for Nick, and we were all strolling along the Sullivan River, enjoying the raised water levels and increased volume of discharge. At the junction with the River and the passage leading to the Mountain Room, Ralph experimented with his photography while we just enjoyed the area. I also showed Nick Armstrong's Folly.

Threading our way through the breakdown in the stream leading to the Mountain Room, we climbed up to the Mountain Room and meandered about for awhile before heading back out. The entire trip took about 4 hours, with nobody tired or hurt. It actually felt strange to be changing caving gear in sunny warm weather. Dark and cold had seemed to be the norm for most of us. It was a successful trip with beautiful weather, culminated by a trip to Steak and Shake afterwards.

Near Normal Grotto

Meeting at BroMenn Medical Center, Normal, Illinois. Second Friday of the month.

E-MAIL:

nngwebmaster@yahoo.com

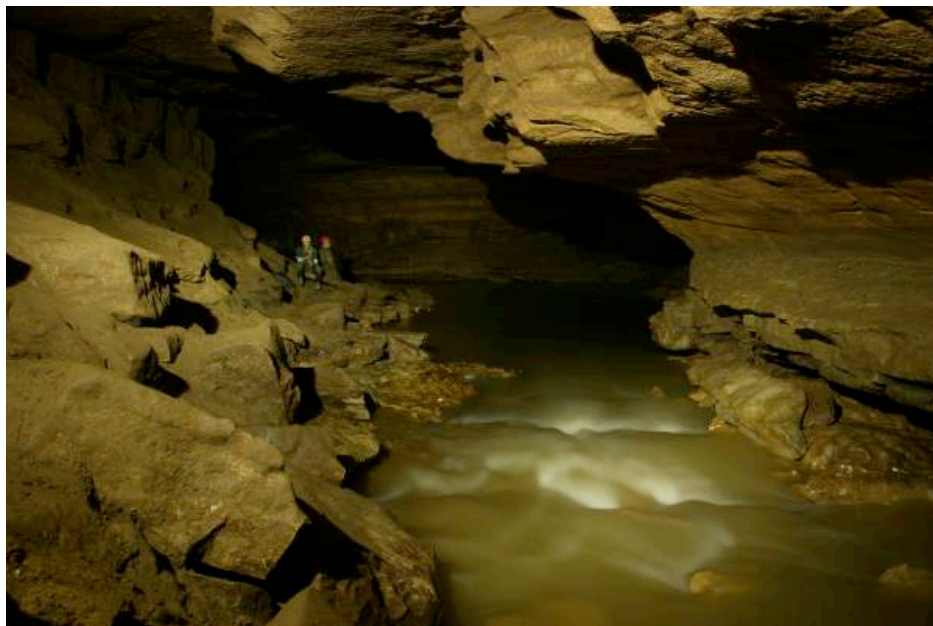


We're on the Web!

See us at:

<http://www.caves.org/grotto/nng/>

Sullivan River – Bill and Laura. Photo by Ralph Sawyer.
Light painting by Todd McCartney.



Sullivan River – Nick. Photo by Ralph Sawyer

