



# The Hollow Earth News

Volume 19 No. 3

March 2012



Sea Cave at Cave Point County Park, Door County, Wisconsin  
Photo courtesy of Bryan Kleist



**The Wisconsin Speleological Society**

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Vacant Position

Vacant Position

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**Cave Conservation Chairman:** Bob Bultman ( NE Wis. ) &  
Gary Emerson ( SW Wis. )

*The Hollow Earth News* is the official monthly newsletter of the Wisconsin Speleological Society, a grotto of the National Speleological Society. Exchanges and inquiries, as well as articles for publication, should be sent to the editor's address listed above.

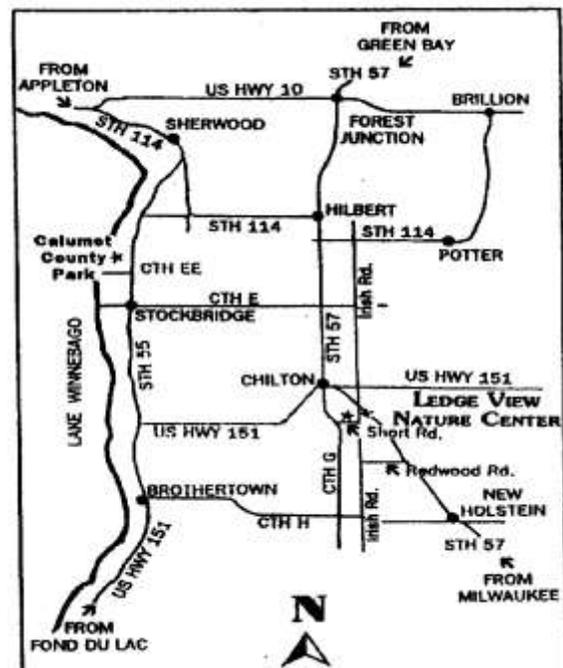
WSS web page: <http://www.wisconsincaves.org>

Send remittance (payable to: WSS) and changes of address to:  
**Brad Graf**  
1228 Williams Ave.  
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## Membership Info

Annual membership in the WSS is now based on how you would like to receive this newsletter. The fees are: Electronic version **emailed to you** is \$15 per individual and \$18 per family. The **mailed version** is \$20 per individual and \$25 per family. The WSS Membership Year begins on June 1<sup>st</sup> and ends on May 31<sup>st</sup> of the following year. If you join other than in June, please prorate, divide total by number of months left until May and pay accordingly so that your membership ends in May. Include your email address, your NSS number and any information that you want in the WSS database and printed in the annual Membership List.

The WSS usually meets at 11:00 a.m. on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday of every month at the Ledge View Nature Center at W2348 Short Road, Chilton, Wisconsin, 53014. This schedule sometimes changes and WSS meetings are held at other locations. Please refer to the latest issue of *The Hollow Earth News* for updated information. The WSS strongly advocates safe caving and caving related activities. However, neither the WSS nor its members can guarantee the safety of anyone participating in these activities and are not responsible for injuries, illnesses, deaths or financial losses during such participation. The WSS and its members do not necessarily endorse or agree with the opinions and articles in *The Hollow Earth News* and the *Wisconsin Speleologist*, or with opinions and articles presented in any other WSS publications and cannot guarantee the accuracy or validity of them.



# Caving Calendar

A great selection of upcoming caving activities is in the works! All are welcome in any of our caving activities. These outings may include caving trips, educational opportunities, survey opportunities, and cave excavation activities. I hope you can join us on one of these great offerings and become a part of the wonderful world of underground caving adventures. One huge issue everyone needs to be aware of in any of our caving activities is the devastation of our bat populations that will occur from the White Nose Syndrome (WNS) when it reaches Wisconsin. The following link provides information about WNS <http://www.caves.org/WNS/index.htm>. It is at our doorstep. WNS was found within the range of Wisconsin Little brown bats during the winter of 2010-2011. The state of Wisconsin has listed four hibernating bat species as threatened, listed *G. destructans* (the WNS fungus) as a prohibited invasive species, and has adopted provisions to ss. NR 40.04 and 40.07 (the invasive species law) relating to early detection and prevention of the spread of WNS due to anthropogenic (human) activities. Per Wisc. DNR rules:

- Landowners of caves and mines with bats are responsible for not allowing the knowing transfer or introduction of the prohibited WNS fungus to their property. Many private cave and mine landowners statewide have partnered with the WDNR in WNS prevention. Many privately owned caves and mines are currently closed to caving activities at request of the landowner in an effort to prevent any potential risk of human assisted transfer of the WNS fungus. Landowner permission should always be sought prior to each caving trip.

- Cavers may not use gear that has been used in a cave/mine outside of Wisconsin in a cave/mine within Wisconsin. Caving gear should be dedicated for use in Wisconsin only and should be stored separately from gear dedicated to out-of-state caving activities.

- Equipment, gear, clothing and other objects that have been in or near a cave or mine located in this state must be cleaned following department-approved protocols before they can be brought into another cave or mine in this state. The decontamination process for all equipment, gear, clothing and other objects that have been in or near a cave or mine in Wisconsin must begin immediately upon exit (i.e. gear must be cleaned or contained within 100 feet of the cave or mine entrance).

- Even quiet activity may unnecessarily arouse bats from hibernation. Frequent arousals of bats can cause them to use up valuable energy reserves, which could lead to increased susceptibility to diseases such as WNS and even death (constituting take). It is illegal to take, transport, possess, process or sell any wild animal that is included on the Wisconsin Endangered and Threatened Species List without a valid permit. Caves and mines that serve hibernating bats should not be entered while the bats are hibernating (October-May) to avoid unnecessary disturbance.

- When storing or transporting dirty caving gear ensure steps are taken to avoid contaminating clean items. For example, while in storage or in a vehicle, gear should remain in a sealed container until the container is removed from the vehicle. After caving, dirty gear should be removed outside the vehicle and placed in a sealed container outside of the vehicle. The container can then be transported to an area where it can be decontaminated.

- Most commercial cave & mine sites in Wisconsin have developed WNS prevention plans in cooperation with the WDNR and

do not allow visitors to wear clothing or gear on tours that has been in other caves or mines, even if it has been washed\*.

Check with commercial caves regarding their policies prior to visiting. \*Ledge View Nature Center and Maribel Caves County Park have adopted WDNR-approved WNS prevention plans for their properties. Participants in these county-owned cave activities are required to follow methods outlined in these plans. Both county sites require the use of the dedicated cave gear already on-site, or participants may use clothing and gear that has never been used in another cave or mine. Personal clothing worn under county-owned dedicated gear must be dedicated by the individual to the property or must not have been used in any other cave or mine.

If you have any questions about the Ledge View or Maribel activities, please feel free to contact me at home in the evenings at [608-544-2212](tel:608-544-2212) or on the days of the cave activities by cell phone at [608-370-1883](tel:608-370-1883). You can also reach me via e-mail until 4:00 on the day before each activity. On the day of the Maribel outings, you can also contact Al Schema by cell phone at [920-242-5892](tel:920-242-5892) or Mike Sobush at [920-860-6123](tel:920-860-6123).

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**3/17-18** - Saturday and Sunday - The **March meeting for the WSS** has been moved to [UW-Fox Valley campus](http://www.uwfox.uwc.edu/wesm/) at 1478 Midway Road in Menasha WI to room 1551. Meeting time is 10:00 till 11:00. UW-Fox Valley is one building and it is also the building that holds the Weis Earth Science Museum (<http://www.uwfox.uwc.edu/wesm/>). There will be a beginning-caver slide show presentation at the meeting and informational overview for anyone interested in learning about caving and the mysteries of the underground. After-meeting activities, will offer a free cave tour, refreshments, and a raffle at Ledge View Nature Center at 12 noon. There are also two days of cave exploration and excavation opportunities set for the Nature Center for the weekend. A volunteer crew of five is being requested for both days to help out with the excavation activities. Times for the excavation activities are from 8:30 AM until 4:00 PM on both days. For Saturday night, the heated Nature Center will be open for those who would like to spend the night at no charge. Just bring something soft to sleep on and covers to keep warm. This is a great opportunity for anyone to see and participate in a major cave expansion and exploration that will be going on in the caves at Ledge View. Everyone is welcome to help out and be a part of any day of the activities. More information about Ledge View and directions to get to the Nature Center can be found at ([http://www.co.calumet.wi.us/departments2.html?dept\\_id=70](http://www.co.calumet.wi.us/departments2.html?dept_id=70)).

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*\*New Posting\** **3/31, 4/1** - Saturday and Sunday - A cave activity day is being planned for **Cherney Maribel Caves County Park**. Times for the park activities are from 8:00 till 4:30. Caving activities are being organized for excavation work in Split Rock Cave and Tartarus Caves. We are currently 65 feet way from a connection between the two caves. You will not want to miss out on this historic connection. You can stop in anytime during the posted hours to help out. Everyone is welcome to help out and be a part of the excavation and exploratory activities. The park is closed for the season. However, there will be access to the lower parking lot. The gate is closed, the lock will only appear to be locked. You can open the lock and open the gate to drive in. Please close the gate and replace the lock to the same position as found, when entering or leaving the park.

## Caving Calendar (cont'd)

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*\*New Posting\** **4/21-22** - Saturday and Sunday - At **Ledge View Nature Center** in Chilton WI, there are two days of cave exploration and excavation opportunities set for the Nature Center. A volunteer crew of five is being requested for both days to help out with the excavation activities. Times for the excavation activities are from 8:30 AM until 4:00 PM on both days. On Saturday from 10:00 till 11:00 is the WSS April statewide Board Meeting and from 11:00 till noon on Saturday is the WSS statewide General Meeting. For Saturday night, the heated Nature Center will be open for those who would like to spend the night at no charge. Just bring something soft to sleep on and covers to keep warm. This is a great opportunity for anyone to see and participate in a major cave expansion and exploration that will be going on in the caves at Ledge View. Everyone is welcome to help out and be a part of any day of the activities. More information about Ledge View and directions to get to the Nature Center can be found at ([http://www.co.calumet.wi.us/departments2.1ml?dept\\_id=70](http://www.co.calumet.wi.us/departments2.1ml?dept_id=70)).

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**4/28-29** - Saturday and Sunday - A cave activity weekend is being planned for **\*\*Cherney Maribel Caves County Park**. Times for the park activities are from 9:00 till 4:00. A volunteer crew from Manitowoc is being requested to help out for the weekend. A small utility tractor will be available for the weekend to help out also. No public tours will be given this weekend. Everyone is welcome to help out and be a part of the excavation and exploratory activities. You can stop in anytime during the 9:00 till 4:00 posted hours to help out on both days.

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**5/12** - Saturday - Mark your calendars now. The **Wisconsin Bat Festival** will be held Saturday, May 12, 2012 in Madison. Details to follow in the coming months. We hope you can attend, learn, and help us celebrate BATS!

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**5/12-13** - Saturday and Sunday - A cave activity weekend is being planned for **\*\*Cherney Maribel Caves County Park**. Times for the park activities are from 9:00 till 4:00. A volunteer crew from Manitowoc is being requested to help out for the weekend. A small utility tractor will be available for the weekend to help out also. No public tours will be given this weekend. Everyone is welcome to help out and be a part of the excavation and exploratory activities. You can stop in anytime during the 9:00 till 4:00 posted hours to help out on both days.

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**5/20** - Sunday - "**Free Public Tours**" in **Maribel New Hope Cave** at **\*\*Cherney Maribel Caves County Park**. Tours will be led by experienced tour guides. The tours are free and open to the public. In addition, cave excavation opportunities have been added for the day in Split Rock Cave and maybe also in Tartarus Cave. A volunteer crew has been requested to help out with the digs.

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**5/25-28** - Friday, Saturday, Sunday, and Monday (Memorial Day Weekend) **41st Kentucky Speleofest**, at Lone Star Preserve, Bonnieville, KY. Hosted by Louisville Grotto. See [Louisville.caves.org](http://Louisville.caves.org) for more info.

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**6/9-10** - Saturday and Sunday - A cave activity weekend is being planned for **\*\*Cherney Maribel Caves County Park**.

Times for the park activities are from 9:00 till 4:00. A volunteer crew from Manitowoc is being requested to help out for the weekend. A small utility tractor will be available for the weekend to help out also. No public tours will be given this weekend. Everyone is welcome to help out and be a part of the excavation and exploratory activities. You can stop in anytime during the 9:00 till 4:00 posted hours to help out on both days.

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**6/17** - Sunday - "**Free Public Tours**" in **Maribel New Hope Cave** at **\*\*Cherney Maribel Caves County Park**. Tours will be led by experienced tour guides. The tours are free and open to the public. In addition, cave excavation opportunities have been added for the day in Split Rock Cave and maybe also in Tartarus Cave. A volunteer crew has been requested to help out with the digs.

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**6/22-24** - Friday, Saturday, and Sunday - **Coldwater Cave Family weekend**. Enjoy this annual event at Iowa's longest cave near Bur Oak, IA. Get a taste of Coldwater by helping with the monthly surveys. Contact John Lovaas at [jlovaas@mc.net](mailto:jlovaas@mc.net) for more info.

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**6/25-29** - Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday - The **2012 NSS Convention** will be held this year in Lewisburg, West Va. If you are a new NSS member, note that you receive a \$40 discount to attend! And for new members, there will be a reception held with NSS Fellows. At the reception, you will meet NSS President William Shrewsbury and other NSS officers who will greet you. Provided will be hors d'oeuvres and other goodies such as a free shot glass filled with some of the finest local moonshine (or soda, if you prefer). There are also discounts for students to attend the convention. Check out the NSS convention link at <http://nss2012.com/> for more information and check out the theme of the convention.

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**7/14** - Saturday - A cave activity day is being planned for **\*\*Cherney Maribel Caves County Park**. Times for the park activities are from 9:00 till 4:00. A volunteer crew from Manitowoc is being requested to help out for the day. A small utility tractor will be available for the day to help out also. No public tours will be given this day. Everyone is welcome to help out and be a part of the excavation and exploratory activities. You can stop in anytime during the 9:00 till 4:00 posted hours to help out.

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**7/15** - Sunday - "**Free Public Tours**" in **Maribel New Hope Cave** at **\*\*Cherney Maribel Caves County Park**. Tours will be led by experienced tour guides. The tours are free and open to the public. In addition, cave excavation opportunities have been added for the day in Split Rock Cave and maybe also in Tartarus Cave. A volunteer crew has been requested to help out with the digs.

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**7/20-22** - Friday, Saturday, and Sunday - **Karst-O-Rama 2012**. The Greater Cincinnati Grotto is putting the "Karst" back into Karst-O-Rama for their 20th year at Great Saltpetre Cave Preserve in Mt. Vernon, KY! Registration is limited to NSS/Grotto members only with the option to sponsor up to a total of three (3) non-member guests. Come enjoy a variety of cave trips and many-family friendly activities! For more information and updates see their website at (<http://karstorama.com>).

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**8/3-5** - Friday, Saturday, and Sunday - **Iowa Grotto picnic.**

There are not many details out yet, but mark your calendar and save the date. More info to follow later.

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**8/10-12** - Friday, Saturday, and Sunday - **Minnesota Speleological Survey (MSS) 50th Anniversary of the MSS celebration and Cornfeed** More info to follow.

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**8/11-12** - Saturday and Sunday - A cave activity weekend is being planned for **\*\*Cherney Maribel Caves County Park**. Times for the park activities are from 9:00 till 4:00. A volunteer crew from Manitowoc is being requested to help out for the weekend. A small utility tractor will be available for the weekend to help out also. No public tours will be given this weekend. Everyone is welcome to help out and be a part of the excavation and exploratory activities. You can stop in anytime during the 9:00 till 4:00 posted hours to help out on both days.

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**8/19** - Sunday - "**Free Public Tours**" in **Maribel New Hope Cave** at **\*\*Cherney Maribel Caves County Park**. Tours will be led by experienced tour guides. The tours are free and open to the public. In addition, cave excavation opportunities have been added for the day in Split Rock Cave and maybe also in Tartarus Cave. A volunteer crew has been requested to help out with the digs.

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**9/15** - Saturday - A cave activity day is being planned for **\*\*Cherney Maribel Caves County Park**. Times for the park activities are from 9:00 till 4:00. A volunteer crew from Manitowoc is being requested to help out for the day. A small utility tractor will be available for the day to help out also. No public tours will be given this day. Everyone is welcome to help out and be a part of the excavation and exploratory activities. You can stop in anytime during the 9:00 till 4:00 posted hours to help out.

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**9/16** - Sunday - "**Free Public Tours**" in **Maribel New Hope Cave** at **\*\*Cherney Maribel Caves County Park**. Tours will be led by experienced tour guides. The tours are free and open to the public. In addition, cave excavation opportunities have been added for the day in Split Rock Cave and maybe also in Tartarus Cave. A volunteer crew has been requested to help out with the digs.

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**10/13-14** - Saturday and Sunday - A cave activity weekend is being planned for **\*\*Cherney Maribel Caves County Park**. Times for the park activities are from 9:00 till 4:00. A volunteer crew from Manitowoc is being requested to help out for the weekend. A small utility tractor will be available for the weekend to help out also. No public tours will be given this weekend. Everyone is welcome to help out and be a part of the excavation and exploratory activities. You can stop in anytime during the 9:00 till 4:00 posted hours to help out on both days.

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**10/21** - Sunday - "**Free Public Tours**" in **Maribel New Hope Cave** at **\*\*Cherney Maribel Caves County Park**. Last tour of the year. Tours will be led by experienced tour guides. The tours are free and open to the public. In addition, cave excavation opportunities have been added for the day in Split Rock Cave and maybe also in Tartarus Cave. A volunteer crew has been requested to

help out with the digs.

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**\*\*Cherney Maribel Caves County Park** is just off of I-43 half way between Manitowoc and Green Bay. Take the Maribel exit off of I-43 onto Hwy 147 east. Next drive less than a 1/4 mile onto Hwy 147 and then turn north onto County Hwy R. The park is one mile north on County Hwy R on the right hand side. Just follow the signs for the park once you exit I-43.

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## NEWS AND NOTES

### New WNS Decon Protocols Discussed in USFWS Webinar

Submitted by John Lovaas

NSS Liason Peter Youngbaer has shared a link to series of US Fish & Wildlife Service webinars:

[http://nctc.fws.gov/CSP/Resources/white\\_nose\\_syndrome\\_webinar\\_series/home.html](http://nctc.fws.gov/CSP/Resources/white_nose_syndrome_webinar_series/home.html)

Click on the link "Archive of past White-Nose Syndrome webinars"; in the video player's menu, scroll down to the Jan. 27 presentation "National WNS Decontamination Protocols".

The new piece of information is this: immersing gear in water >50 degrees Celsius (122F) for at least 15 minutes will destroy *Geomyces destructans*.

If your home water heater is set at a sufficiently high temperature to prevent the growth of microorganisms in your heater tank and water lines (an unrelated topic you can read more about here- <http://www.osha.gov/dts/osta/otm/legionnaires/hotwater.html>), you are likely getting water sufficiently hot at your washing machine to ensure a temperature at the end of the soak cycle of 122F. Most folks have at least one thermometer suitable for this purpose (every homebrewer would, of course!), and it's easily confirmed. If nothing else, based on the OSHA page, it might be a good thing to see just how hot your hot water is.

I understand the USFWS will be publishing the revised decon protocols in the very near future.

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### Long-time Bat Researcher, Tom Kunz, Seriously Injured, Continues his Recovery

Tom Kunz, one of the world's leading bat researchers for more than four decades, and a prime investigator into White Nose Syndrome, was hit by a car on October 26, 2011, on the way to the opening reception of the North American Symposium on Bat Research (NASBR). The accident occurred right outside the entrance to the Royal Ontario Museum. News continues to come through the CaringBridge website. Here is the link to connect to Tom Kunz's CaringBridge website: <http://www.caringbridge.org/visit/tomkunz>

## News and Notes (cont'd)

### Summer 2012 Karst Field Studies Program

The Hoffman Environmental Research Institute through its Center for Cave and Karst Studies and in cooperation with the Mammoth Cave International Center for Science and Learning, are pleased to announce the launch of the Summer 2012 Karst Field Studies Program. Courses this summer will include:

- Exploration of Mammoth Cave, June 4-10
- Techniques in Karst Groundwater Investigations, June 6-8
- Karst Hydrogeology of the Ozarks, June 10-16
- Cave Archaeology, June 11-16
- Cave Survey and Cartography, June 17-23
- Application of Geophysical Methods to Karst Terrains, June 16-22

Courses may be taken for graduate, undergraduate, or continuing education credit. Courses may also be taken as non-credit workshops.

For more information about the program, courses, how to register, and instructors, please visit [www.karstfieldstudies.com](http://www.karstfieldstudies.com). While visiting the website be sure to also check out the "Scholarships" tab for information about Nick Crawford Karst Education Scholarship, a competitive award designed to offer financial assistance for attending a course.

If you have any questions please contact the 2012 Karst Field Studies Director, Dr. Leslie North, at [leslie.north@wku.edu](mailto:leslie.north@wku.edu).

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### Crystal Cave to be Under New Management

Submitted by Blaze Cunningham

Hello Cavers,

We will be around for maybe another year, but some big changes are afoot. Jeannie and I have sold the cave, house, 100 acre woods, fudge machine, and all the rocks and t-shirts. We are fixin' to move on to the green grass of retirement! If you have followed my 'caveman' stories over the years.....most are true..... ;-)

Here is a link to the news article (Part 1) if you want to read more: <http://mygatewaynews.com/main.asp?SectionID=2&SubSectionID=39&ArticleID=3705>

Part 2 can be read at this link:  
<http://mygatewaynews.com/main.asp?SectionID=2&subsectionID=39&articleID=3747>

Anyway, that's the news from here.....

Blaze  
Crystal Cave, WI  
[www.acoolcave.com](http://www.acoolcave.com)

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### Nominations Requested for the Elected WSS Officers and Board Members

Please send your nominations by e-mail directly to WSS Chairman Kasey Fiske ([fiske@grad.wisc.edu](mailto:fiske@grad.wisc.edu)) by **April 25** so they can be included on the election ballot that will be published in the May issue of the *Hollow Earth News*. The WSS elections are slated for the WSS May 19th meeting. All positions are open for nominations. WSS officers must be current members of NSS or join NSS upon election.

**Chairman** - The Chairman of the Society shall supervise and guide the accomplishment of the purposes and objectives of the Society, the conduct of business, and the activities of the Society. The Chairman also shall conduct the Board of Directors meetings and the Society's general meetings unless he delegates this responsibility to one of the other executive officers.

**Vice-Chairman** - The Vice-Chairman of the Society shall assist the Chairman in the fulfillment of his responsibilities, aid in the accomplishment of the purposes and objectives of the Society, arrange for programs, establish meeting locations, and carry out the duties of the Chairman during his absence or incapacity.

**Secretary-Treasurer** - The Secretary-Treasurer of the Society will keep the minutes of the meetings of the Society and the Board of Directors, will receive and answer correspondence, will maintain a current list of the members of the Society, will receive and account for the funds of the Society, and will pay out the funds of the Society as directed by the Board of Directors.

**Board Members** (Four positions) - A member of the Board of Directors shall govern the Society in accordance to the Articles and Bylaws of this Constitution, and shall have full power and voting rights to conduct and supervise all business of the Society and perform all other functions incident to the proper conduct of the Society.

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### Interesting Saline Stalactites

Submitted by Kasey Fiske

From an upcoming Discovery Channel Special - "Frozen" to be aired on Sunday, March 18.

"Brinicles" - Who would have thought? Interesting. Click this link for a preview.

[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r4cX2Ept2zE&feature=player\\_embedded](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r4cX2Ept2zE&feature=player_embedded)

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## Moments In Spelean History

by Gary K. Soule, Grotto Historian

As a compiler of grotto records, statistics, and facts, the following list was much longer, but is now getting shorter, so I figured I might as well use it while I can.

What follows is the official top eight longest Wisconsin Speleological Society members starting with the longest member first. The date when they first joined is also given. The list is officially current as of Sunday, January 1, 2012.

Please keep in mind that some of us were cavers long before joining the WSS, but this list only reflects the time these individuals were actually WSS members.

1. Mark L. Langenfeld, Monticello, Wisconsin  
December, 1967
2. Kevin S. Hennings, Gurnee, Illinois  
December, 1967
3. George W. Zachariasen, West Jacksonport,  
Wisconsin December 1968
4. Gary K. Soule, Sturgeon Bay, Wisconsin  
August 23, 1971
5. Roddie Larsen, Menasha, Wisconsin  
1972 - 1973
6. John S. Kellner, Brussels, Wisconsin  
August, 1978
7. Sharon L. Kellner, Brussels, Wisconsin  
November, 1979
8. David W. Gerboth, Apple Valley, Minnesota  
October, 1985

*Note:* The dates joined are from the published records of the first mention of the person in a WSS publication as being a member. Some fluctuation may occur. As mentioned previously, a few cavers have been caving for years prior to joining the WSS on, or about, the above listed dates.

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## WSS Board Meeting Minutes

Ledge View Nature Center at Chilton, Wisconsin  
Saturday, February 18, 2012

Submitted by Dave Sheffer and Kasey Fiske

Present: Kasey Fiske, Mike Sobush, Allan Schema, Dave Sheffer, Bryan Kleist, Robert "Nuke" Thompson, and Gary Soule as proxy for Brad Graf.

### Board Meeting called to order at 10:05

Kasey read the treasury report for Brad Graf and it is unchanged since the January meeting. Treasury: General Fund \$3,827.52 and Maribel Fund \$120.00. The January meeting minutes were unanimously approved with no corrections.

The two new Ledge View patches are in. Gary presented the new patches at the meeting. He also gave Kasey \$70 in cash from the sale of some of the patches he sold to patch collectors. An additional \$40 in patch sales, was collected at the meeting from people that wanted the patches. A total of \$110 will be sent to Brad to deposit in the WSS treasury. A motion was approved to send one each of the two new patches to the NSS Museum of Speleology and to our own WSS Library.

Kasey informed everyone that we can now re-order more of the WSS caving brochures. 1000 will be ordered from the *HEN* printer. The only change on the brochures was our website domain name and it is now official and live at [www.wisconsincaves.org](http://www.wisconsincaves.org). The Friends Group of Ledge View will be paying for the new ordered pamphlets.

There was a final review and discussion on the text on the back of all five of the Maribel postcards. Copies of the back text on all the postcards were handed out for review. A lot of people gave constructive feedback for changes. A motion was approved for the new text changes. Another motion approved the ordering of the postcards. Kasey will send the new postcards to the *HEN* printer for printing.

Discussion followed on the planned WSS March meeting and presentation at UW-Fox Valley in Menasha. The meeting and presentation is being set up to try and attract new people to caving and hopefully to join the WSS. A motion was approved for the expenditure of \$20.00 to reserve a room for the meeting. The room is reserved from 9:00 till 11:00. We also have an option to keep the room for an additional hour till 12:00 for a \$10 fee if it is needed. The early start time for the room is to allow us time to set up for the meeting and a public caving slideshow scheduled at 10:00. There will be a very short board meeting at 9:30. George Zachariasen will be giving the slideshow at 10:00 about caving in Wisconsin. We plan for time at the end of the slideshow for questions and answers. After the meeting, participants will be offered free caving trips at Ledge View. Food will be available at the Ledge View for lunch and also we will be offering some door prizes to participants who make it to Ledge View for the tours. Some of the suggested door prizes were a free WSS membership for a year, patches, collectable cave rocks, and a caving light. A few of our members will be running a volunteer crew at Ledge View during the meeting at UW-Fox Valley. When the meeting participants return to Ledge View for a free tour, they will be able to see an excavation dig in progress. After their tour, they will be given an opportunity to join in on the dig if they wish. Bryan Kleist requested permission for advertising expenses for flyers and poster board advertisements for the UW-Fox Valley WSS Meeting. A motion was approved for a \$30 expenditure for advertising costs.

The Board Meeting was adjourned at 10:55.

### General Meeting called to order at 11:05

The General Meeting was set up in the Ledge View staff office area and dedicated almost entirely to the review of the new WSS website. We needed one of the office computers to present and review the new website. Allan did the navigation of the website. Suggested changes and add-ons to the website

## WSS Board Meeting Minutes (cont'd)

were discussed, as we looked at all the pages and navigational tools on the website. Nuke was asked and agreed to organize a vertical cavers page on the website. The website includes a caving calendar that people will be allowed access to for posting events. Ledge View staff, for instance, will be able to post any Ledge View outings on the calendar. It will be password protected. Overall changes to the website, other than the calendar, will be limited to a few people. Any major changes will need to be approved by the WSS Board. A motion was carried unanimously for the approval of the new website and domain name. Everyone was very appreciative and in approval of Allan Schema's long hours of work on the website. Thanks, Allan!!!!

Crystal Cave updates: All excavation activities are now closed down for the season at Crystal Cave.

Ledge View Updates: A work crew was available for the day. A dig was scheduled for the after meeting activities and on Sunday in the Rock of Ages Passage. We are now working our way into the end room/passage that has standing height.

Maribel Updates: Mike Sobush and Allan Schema reported out on the meeting with Manitowoc County Park's Director, Adam Backus, on January 28th. In attendance from the WSS at the meeting were Rick Johnson, Allan, Mike, and Kasey. In attendance for the mountain bike club was Wade Marks. The meeting was to give an overview of the goals and planned activities for the park this year. Getting electricity in to the park is a major goal for the WSS and Adam. The need for the construction of a new bridge on the River Trail was discussed. Hopefully, Adam will have the funds for the bridge in a grant he is writing for another bridging project elsewhere. Adam also will be getting the funds together to purchase the construction supplies needed for an announcement kiosk for Maribel. The WSS and the bike club, in a joint project, will provide the labor for the construction of the kiosk. Kasey announced a dig date for March 3 and 4 at Maribel in Split Rock and Tartarus Caves.

Meeting adjourned at 12:00.

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## New Cave Patches Offered for Sale!

Submitted by Kasey Fiske



The Wisconsin Speleological Society just produced two beautiful new embroidered patches on the caves at the Ledge View Nature Center just south of Chilton, in Calumet County, Wisconsin. This continues the fine collector's patch series.

Both are four inch square size, 100% full embroidery, colored patches as shown.

The first patch says: "CAROLYN'S CAVERNS CHILTON, WISCONSIN" on it. It shows an interior walkway in the main Wayne's World Passage, and was designed by Gary K. Soule.

The second patch says: "LEDGE VIEW CAVES CANDLELIGHT TOURS CHILTON, WI" on it. It was designed by Kasey Fiske and his daughter, Kayla Fiske.

Both patches uniquely depict bats in full flight!

Each patch is for sale to both Wisconsin Speleological Society members and non-members alike for only

\$5.00 each, plus \$.50 postage. If two patches are ordered, the postage still remains only \$.50.

They can be ordered from Kasey Fiske at S9740 Exchange Road, Prairie du Sac, Wisconsin 53578. Phone: (608) 544-2212. If you have any questions please email him at [fiske@grad.wisc.edu](mailto:fiske@grad.wisc.edu) and he will gladly get back to you.



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## TRIP REPORTS

### Maribel – Placement of New Slurry Dam on the Edge of the End Room

Submitted by Kasey Fiske

Saturday and Sunday, August 6th and 7th, was set up as our fifth excavation weekend at Maribel New Hope Cave. The goal for the weekend was to finally clear the remainder of the debris along the left wall of the West Passage going into the end room. We had about 6 more feet of materials to remove on the left side of the passage to get us to the end room. The right side had already been cleared. If, at the end of the weekend we still had time, we would also like to get the second slurry dam moved to the inner edge of the end room.

Mike Sobush had some free time in the afternoon on Friday before the dig weekend to pump water out of the cave, so he went up to the park and pumped water for about four hours. He pumped the small sump pump dry and put it away for the weekend. The larger sump pump he used until it was sucking air and then he shut it off but left it set up for Saturday morning. Mike's extra help allowed us to get a head start on the weekend. Thanks, Mike!

I left my house after work around 6:00 in the late afternoon on Friday and headed up to Mike's house to stay the weekend. I

wanted to get up to the Maribel area early so I could get a good night's sleep. I was scheduled to pick up one community service worker early Saturday morning at 7:00. I arrived at Mike's house in Francis Creek at about 9:00 in the evening. Mike was still up watching TV. Mike let me know that we had a skid steer from the Manitowoc Highway Department for the weekend, instead of the John Deere small utility tractor that we normally use. Adam Backus, the Manitowoc Park's Director, was loading up the tractor on a trailer for our use and the front axle broke. It would have to get fixed. If it had to break, it was good that it broke when it did at the Highway Department instead of at the park. If it happened at the park, we would not have had any equipment to replace it with during the weekend. Adam brought over to Mike's house the skid steer on a trailer for us to use, instead of the tractor. I shared a few night caps and tall tales with Mike and then we watched the news to catch the weather for the weekend. The weather was looking good for the weekend so we hoped we would get a lot done in the park. I made it to bed at a decent time after watching the news and got a good night's sleep.

Saturday morning I was up early at 6:00 to have breakfast with Mike. I left Mike's house by 6:30 so that I could get to the Manitowoc County Courthouse for the scheduled 7:00 pickup time of our community service volunteer. We had one lined up for the weekend. He was at the Courthouse and ready to go when I arrived. This allowed me to turn around right away and head back to Cherney Maribel Caves County Park to get our day started. Usually, I have to wait around for some of them to show up and I can't get going right away. We arrived at the park at around 7:30. Mike had left his house early also and was just pulling in the park after we arrived. Brad Graf and Rick Johnson were already at the park. We chatted for a bit and then helped Mike get the skid steer off of the trailer. The gate on the end of the last parking lot was opened up. Mike parked the truck and trailer out of the way just off of the end parking lot on the Upper Escarpment Trail and then drove the skid steer towards the storage trailer. We followed behind in our vehicles.

We drove to the storage trailer and opened it up. We then unlocked and lifted out the generator from the secure Jobox Gang Box that is in front of the trailer. We checked it for oil, gas, and then started it up. We got our dedicated caving gear on for the day. Brad and I went down the escarpment ramp to open up the cave with Mike's keys. We wanted to get the larger sump pump started up again to get all of the water out of the cave so we could start the day's excavation activities. Rick had his chainsaw with him again for the day and wanted to attack more of the downed trees in the park. He took the volunteer with him to start cutting up some downed trees, while he waited for us to get the cave ready to go. Mike drove the skid steer down the escarpment ramp so he could start removing the cave debris that we had been stockpiling on the work pad across from the cave entrance on the last two previous dig weekends.

The reason we had stockpiled materials there was because of the new pipe installation on the Lower Escarpment Trail. The pipes had been put in four weeks before the day's activities between the cave entrance and our drying pile. The Lower Escarpment Trail had become too soft in the spot where the pipes were put in to drive over it without getting stuck. Mike was pretty confident that we could make it across the pipe installation spot for this weekend. He dug into the stockpile on the work pad and

started moving materials with the skid steer.

Brad and I got the larger sump pump hose positioned outside on the uphill side of the work pad so it would be out of Mike's travel path and got the larger sump pumped plugged in to start pumping water. We could hear the water start flowing through the hose and water was soon flowing to the outside.

The larger sump pump is set up in the West Passage between the first slurry dam, which is just in front of the Rectangle Room, and the second slurry dam, which is sitting just after the Formation Room. While the accumulated water started to be pumped down between the two slurry dams, Brad and I cleaned up water from low spots in other parts of the cave. The water was bailed into pails and dumped over the first slurry dam so the sump pump could take the water out of the cave for us.

Once we had the low spots in the other parts of the passages cleaned up, we turned our attention to the area between the two sump pumps. As the low spots between the two slurry dams started to be isolated, we used long handled brushes to brush the water from one low spot to the next, clearing the floor towards the larger sump pump, which is positioned in the lowest spot between the two slurry dams. We started in the Lost Hammer Passage and worked toward the Formation Room.

When the last low spot was isolated and almost out of water, we set the sump pump in a larger pail and used smaller pails to bail the remaining water into it. When the sump pump drained the last of the water we bailed into it, we were done pumping for the day and we turned the sump pump off. The sump pump hose was unhooked from the sump pump. The hose was held high as we walked under it all the way to the outside of the cave to get the remaining water out of the hose. We utilized gravity to drain the water out of the hose for us. The larger sump pump and hose were then put away for the day.

I went outside to find Rick and the volunteer he had helping him to let them know we were ready to start the excavation work. I just had to listen for the chainsaw noise to let me know where they were in the park. I found them and let them know we were ready to go. I also took the time to talk with Mike on his skid steer work outside the cave. He was really happy we had the skid steer for the weekend, instead of the John Deere tractor. It was working much better than the tractor in breaking up and scooping out the debris materials from the stockpile. He also happily reported, he was getting through to the drying pile. The area that we had installed the pipes under the trail was holding up well. He was getting through on the trail with little difficulty.

While I had stepped out to find Rick and talk with Mike, Brad had started to move empty pails to the dig front and was starting to fill them up at the dig front. When the volunteer arrived, I instructed him on what he would have to do on the outside. He would be solo on the outside dig tray duties. Until we could get extra help, he would have to be on his own for awhile. Rick and I went into the cave and started moving to the Halloween Room the pails that Brad was filling at the dig front. We placed the pails in the dig tray and called outside to pull when we had three pails in the dig tray. The four of us worked for just a little while by ourselves and then we started to get help.

Don and Kevin Kollath arrived with Barb Belin in the morning. Don took on lead dig and was seconded by Kevin. Kevin also helped carry pails near the dig front. Barb took over the inner dig tray duties in the Halloween Room, which then allowed

## Maribel – Placement of New Slurry Dam on the Edge of the End Room (cont'd)

me to move outside to help our volunteer. Rick and Brad concentrated on moving pails in the cave between Kevin and Barb. Mike, outside on the skid steer, rotated between taking a load of older stockpiled materials from the work pad to taking a load of new materials that were coming out of the cave. The pails came out of the cave at a steady pace. If Mike was not there so we could dump the pails in the loader bucket right away, we would place the full pails of materials on the ground until Mike was able to get back to us and then we would dump all the waiting pails into the loader bucket, one quickly after the other. Usually, we had it timed pretty well so that Mike did not have to wait at the entrance for very long to get a load from us. He was driving back and forth outside pretty continuously all day.

Other than an hour lunch break, we maintained a steady pace with our excavation activities from around 9:30 till 3:00. At 3:00 we stopped sending empty pails to the dig front. It took until about 3:30 to empty the last pail of materials from the cave. The empty pails were stacked in the Halloween Room for Sunday's activities. Rick and I then re-set the larger sump pump between the two slurry dams and strung out and hooked up the larger sump pump hose getting everything set for pumping again the next morning. For the day's dig results, we ended up clearing five more feet of upper debris on the left side of the dig front in the West Passage. We were now just on the edge of the end room on both the right and left side of the passage.

Everyone had a little time to check out our accomplishments. In this neat photo, Don and I are looking into the end room. The

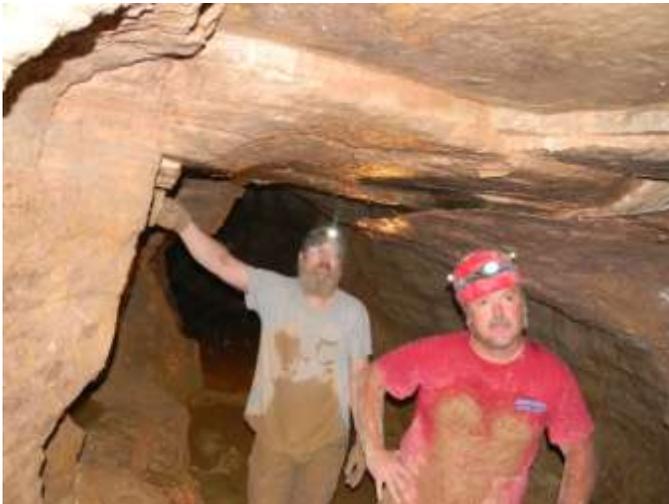


photo was taken from the end room. Behind us is the Formation Room and beyond that the Halloween Room. Hard to believe the end room used to be accessed by a very tight crawl right along the ceiling that is now way about our heads.

It was time to leave the cave and get ready to leave the park. I had to get my community service worker back to Manitowoc by 4:30. Everyone gathered up their gear and we exited the cave. The cave was locked up for the evening. We went up to the storage trailer to get out of our dedicated caving gear. The generator was shut off and locked up along with the storage trailer. Mike drove out to the parking lot to load the skid steer up on the trailer. Everyone followed behind in their vehicles to the park-

ing lots. We helped Mike get the skid steer tied down and then we all left the park.

I made it back in time to the Manitowoc County Courthouse by the 4:30 drop off time with my volunteer. I then drove from the Courthouse back to Mike's house. Mike's wife Pat had supper waiting for us and then I got in a good long hot shower. It felt good after being muddy and wet for most of the day. For the rest of the evening Mike and I chatted and watched some TV. It did not take either one of us very long to get really sleepy. We called it an early evening, after watching the news, and then got in a good night's sleep.

The next morning at 6:00, Mike woke me up to start another day. I had some cereal and coffee with Mike and then got dressed and ready to go. I had to leave early again to go back into Manitowoc to pick up the same community service worker. I got to the Courthouse and he was there waiting for me and ready to go. We got back on the road even before 7:00 and headed back to the park. We stopped at Kwik Trip quick on the way out of town for some snacks and then arrived back at Cherney Maribel Caves County Park shortly after 7:30.

Rick and Mike were already at the park and getting the skid steer off of the trailer behind Mike's truck. I got the gate opened up at the end of the last parking lot. Mike got his truck and trailer parked out of the way and then we followed Mike in the skid steer to the storage trailer in our vehicles.

We got to the storage trailer, opened it up, and the generator out and running. We then got into our dedicated gear. With no Brad for the day, the plan for the morning was to have Mike help me in the cave to start pumping water again. Rick had his chainsaw and could cut up some more downed trees. He took the community service worker with him to help.

Mike drove the skid steer down the escarpment ramp to the front of the cave. I walked behind. On the way down, I could see that Mike had cleared almost three fourths of the stored debris on the work pad on Saturday. It was looking good that we would have it all cleaned up by the end of the day. Mike gave me the key and I got the door open on the cave. We got the electrical cord plugged in for the sump pump. Rick and I had set it up again right, when we left on Saturday, as we soon had water running out of the cave.

Mike and I worked on getting the water out of the cave. It took us about an hour and a half to get all the water out. We then put the larger sump pump and hoses away. I went outside to find Rick and our volunteer to let them know we were ready for the day. Mike got started on removing more of the debris from the work pad.

Don, Kevin, and Barb arrived just in time to get started again. Don and Kevin moved to the dig front and started removing more cave debris. Don was on lead with support of Kevin as seen in the photo on the next page. The light in the picture is illuminating the Formation Room. You can see that they are well beyond the Formation Room and just about into the end room. Barb stepped in to take on the inner dig tray duties. Rick and I carried pails and we had our community service worker on the outside dig tray duties. During the morning hours, we were joined by Allan Schema and he started helping to carry pails. This allowed me to rotate back outside for the remainder of the day to help our community service volunteer.

Mike, outside in the morning, had steadily been removing a lot of what remained of the stored material on the work pad. Just



before lunch break, Mike mentioned that he was so happy with the skid steer compared to the tractor that we usually have to use. The skid steer, he said, had lots more power and lifting strength. I pointed over to the two sitting stones that are sitting along the escarpment cliff face at the bottom of the escarpment ramp and asked Mike if he thought he could handle those? They were huge and had been sitting there for years. They were dug out with a backhoe and placed there at least six years ago by Karl Zeibert when the work pad area was first cleared. We had envisioned using them as sitting stones along the edges of the work pad. Mike said he would give it a try. I was amazed first off that he was able to scoop underneath the first rock with the bucket and even more astonished that he could lift it. I think Mike was too, as he had this great grin on his face as he moved the rock. Mike had to be careful not to lift the rock too high as the heavy weight of the rock wanted to tip the skid steer up on its front wheels. Mike carefully maneuvered the rock into position next to our picnic table and then went after and moved the second rock as well. Wow, what a difference and a great look! It did not take long for the rocks to go into immediate use as sitting stones. Within 15 minutes of the positing of the rocks, some park visitors stopping in to watch what we were doing were already sitting on the stones. Mike and I then were both grinning.

We called lunch at noon. Everyone came out of the cave to sit, rest, and get something to eat and drink. It had been a brisk morning of moving pails. It was nice to sit, chat, and relax for awhile. It was hard to get moving again as everyone was stiffening up, but we all managed to get up and going after our hour break. The rest of the afternoon seemed to creep by. When you get tired, time seems to slow way down. We finally reached 3:00 and it was time to shut down. Barb stopped sending pails to the dig front and started stacking them in the Halloween Room. The last pail rotated to the outside at 3:30 ending our excavation activities. Rick helped me re-set both the large and small sump pump and hoses in the cave for the next time it had to be pumped. Everyone else looked around in the cave to see the results and took some pictures.

For the day's dig results, Don and Kevin had made it all the way into the end room and even lowered the base of the room by another three feet. They were even able to get to and remove what we think was a dead mink on the extreme left side of the end room. It had been sitting there for some time. We knew about it, but we had not been unable to get to it on previous digs

as it was tightly wedged out of reach in a narrow void cavity near the ceiling. They were also able to set up and position a third slurry dam just on the inner edge of the end room and removed most of the debris on the floor from second dam to the new dam. Although not totally done yet, the floor looked great! It will need to be scraped clean yet with a hoe on our next outing.

The lowering of the debris in the end room reinforced what we thought about the end room. The end room looks to be an intersection of a cross passage that cuts all the way through the West Passage. There is a distinct life line in the ceiling running perpendicular to the West Passage which was our first clue that side passages were buried there. The lowering of the floor in the room so far has not revealed a visible void to the left in the room nor is there a void straight ahead, which would be a continuation of the West Passage, but to the right we definitely have a going passage. In the photo, you can see the passage to



the right. Very cool!

It was time to lock up the cave for the weekend. Everyone left the cave and I locked up the cave with Mike's key and helped carry equipment and gear up the escarpment ramp to the storage trailer. The generator was turned off and locked up. Everyone got cleaned up and our dedicated gear was put away. I left the park earlier than everyone else as I had to get my community service worker back to town. Mike and Allan made sure everything was squared away in the park before they left. I make it to Manitowoc on time to drop our volunteer off at 4:30 and then headed for home ending another successful weekend.

We made some great progress on the weekend. Other than the accomplishments already mentioned in and outside the cave, Mike was able to get most of the work pad all cleaned up again and also removed the pile of rocks that we had separately stacked there and utilized them on the River Trail. We put in a combined 115 volunteer hours for the weekend from all of us, which includes the time put in by Mike on Friday. We will be working in the end room now on our next dig weekend and hopefully we will know more on if we have passages going off in three different directions from the end room. Wow, I can wait to see how things turn out!

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## Cave Point County Park

Submitted by Bryan Kleist

On October 2<sup>nd</sup> my wife Michelle and I decided to take a trip to Cave Point in Door County. Once a year we usually go to a park or wildlife area that is within a six hour drive to celebrate our anniversary. We have talked about going to see the Apostle Islands National Lakeshore but due to Michelle's health conditions this past year we decided a trip closer to home would be best. So we went to visit Wisconsin's lesser known sea caves. Being only an hour and a half drive away it was a chance to see some fall colors and take in some amazing scenery. It was a beautiful sunny day with only a slight breeze.



Quite a different story from the weather they had received just days before. We were lucky the County Park was open. The State Parks in Door County were all closed due to the 70mph sustained wind they had just had. All campers were required to leave the parks so they could start cleaning up all the downed trees and debris. Signs were put up so people would not go into the parks. The parks remained closed for more than five days. But that's Wisconsin for you; one day can be so different from the next.

Upon arriving at the park the first thing I thought of and was amazed by was how blue the water was; it almost looked as blue as Lake Superior. I have seen the water around Manitowoc's fishing piers and that water was not blue. Michelle and I walked the shoreline and enjoyed the interesting shapes that water has sculpted on the limestone rocks. The sounds that the gentle waves were making against the rocks were soothing to the soul. Michelle was interested in finding the Geocache that was placed somewhere in the park. We used a portable handheld Garmin GPS to try and find it. We spent about an hour looking for it to no avail. Whoever hid it did a terrific job so that it would not be found. I think I looked into every nook and cranny there was to the bluff face.

We spent more than a couple hours at the park and then stayed the night at a local motel. It was nice spending time with my wife away from home after her five week hospital stay. Seeing the smile on my wife's face as we walked the shoreline hand in hand reminded me of how lucky I am. It was a beautiful day, spent with beautiful company and I was thankful for God's many blessings.

## Maribel – Tartarus Right Lead Probe

by Kasey Fiske: 1-28-2012

I was contacted in early January by Adam Backus, who is the Manitowoc County Parks Director, about participating in a meeting he was organizing on the future development and current planned activities in Cherney Maribel Caves County Park. The meeting would be at the Manitowoc Highway Department Garage Office. The meeting participants would be himself, Wisconsin Speleological Society (WSS) members, and a mountain bike club representative. The WSS members asked to attend were Mike Sobush, Allan Schema, Rick Johnson, and I. Wade Marks was the mountain bike club representative. All of us are key players in the current and future planning in the park.

The meeting was scheduled for January 28th after email exchanges on which Saturday in January would work best for everyone to attend. Having the confirmed date and knowing how far it is to travel to Manitowoc for just an hour meeting (it is a two and a half hour one way drive for me), I thought I'd better make a full day of it and plan something else for after the meeting. I decided to see if anyone else would be interested in a dig at Cherney Maribel Caves Park after the meeting. I sent out an email on it and got some positive responses from other people that could attend the after-meeting dig. A dig date was then posted and scheduled for January 28th. I also asked for and received some community service work help for the day from the Manitowoc Community Service Coordinator, Linda Dueno-Dufek.

I actually left my house on Friday the 27th to get up to Manitowoc the night before the meeting. One of the main reasons I left on Friday was because of a snow storm that was expected to start late Friday and continue into Saturday morning. I wanted to beat most of the forecast snow storm, as I was unsure what the roads would be like if I waited until Saturday morning to drive. The other reason I left on Friday was so I could get a good night's sleep and would not have to get up extra early for my normal long travel time to Manitowoc. I contacted Mike and he graciously said I was welcome to come up and stay overnight at his house on Friday night in Francis Creek. That was great, because Mike only lives about 10 minutes from the Manitowoc High Department Garage.

I left my house in the late afternoon and headed northeast to Francis Creek. The trip up was uneventful. For the most part, thankfully, I just ran into some flurries on the way up. I took my time going up and made it there before we had too much snow accumulation. Mike and I sat and talked for hours when I got there, and we kept an eye on the weather, before heading in for the night to get some sleep.

The meeting time was set for 9:00, so Mike and I were able to sleep in late until 7:30. We got up, got dressed, had breakfast together, and headed out the door at 8:45. During the night we got about three to four inches of snow, so we had snow to sweep off of our vehicles. Mike and I drove separate vehicles to the meeting because I might have to leave the meeting early, depending on how long it would last, to go pick up our volunteers at the Manitowoc County Courthouse. I had to be there no later than 10:15.

The meeting went by quickly and we got through the agenda. I did, however, have to leave early as there was a continuation and discussion on extra topics. I said my apologies and headed out the door to go get the volunteer crew. I did make it to the

Courthouse just before 10:15 and there were two volunteers waiting for me. I was supposed to have one more volunteer. We waited for an additional 10 minutes and ended up with one no show. We left for the park.

I arrived at the park after 10:30 which was the start time for the after-meeting dig activities. The gate was open, as Rick had opened it up in the morning on his way into the meeting. However, no one was waiting by the gate, as I had expected. There were some tracks going down into the park. It was hard to tell if they were recent tracks. Parts of the tracks were covered up, because the snow was drifting.

We decided to risk it and carefully drove in to see if we could get through. It was not too bad, so we drove all the way down into the lower parking lot. I got as far as just into the first lower parking lot and had to stop there as my car was spinning as I drove further across the lower parking lots. I did not want to get stuck. There was a van and a truck already in the park, which surprised me totally. So the tracks we saw were recent tracks. I did recognize the van. It was Scott Moll's. The truck I did not recognize, but I was hoping it was the one community service worker that was supposed to drive himself to the park. It turned out it was, as he soon came walking out of the woods by the bathrooms. Not too long after that, Scott came walking out onto the parking lot from the trail head to Tartarus and Split Rock Cave.

I asked Scott if he had brought any tools as I realized I had forgotten my park key at home, when it was not in my travel bag. He did not. This was bad, as I did not have any tools with me either. We had tools in the storage trailer but no key to get at them. I gave Mike a call and got through to him to see if he could drop us off a key. He and Allan were just leaving the meeting and Allan said he would drop a key off for us. While we waited for Allan to arrive with a key, Angela Kollath drove down into the park to join us. She also got just about stuck when she got into the lower parking lot. I went into the bathrooms to get suited up with some clean coveralls that I had brought with me. When I came out, Allan had driven into the park and passed off the key. He left again to get something to eat, before he would return to help us later. It was now just after 11:00.

Scott had gotten some tools from Allan, but we still did not have any pails. Scott went on down to the caves with one of the community service workers to get started. He wanted to dig in Tartarus for the day. I was fine with that. Angela, two of the community service workers, and I hiked across some pretty deep snow to get to the storage trailer so we could get pails, the dig tray, and some more tools. It was a long hike through the deep snow down the Upper Escarpment Trail. It was even longer when we had to carry all the gear we got from the trailer, back across the deep snow again to the trail head to the caves. We had to rest before continuing down the trail to Tartarus Cave.

We set up the dig tray for the day. Scott went in on lead. He had one community service worker set up to pull in and fill the dig tray with full pails in the end room near the headbanger rock. Angel was set up two thirds of the way in the passage and I one third of the way to help guide the dig tray in and out of the cave. The other two community service workers pulled the dig tray out of the cave and emptied pails outside.

Scott started on the right lead off of the end room at the current end of Tartarus just a few feet from the headbanger rock. The right lead is very interesting in that it has been eroded out

considerably from running water in the cave. Running water out of the cave can be seen in an interesting video clip on our new WSS website at ([www.wisconsinincaves.org](http://www.wisconsinincaves.org)). The running water had eroded out the top 8 to 10 inches of the debris in the right lead passage for about six feet. We could see another four feet beyond that before the visual void ended. It was going to be interesting to see where the water was coming from and what we could see if we could get to the end of the current 10 foot void.

Scott started digging down the center of the right lead to see how far he could get by the end of the day. Bryan Kleist arrived and joined us in Tartarus at around noon. He was interested in continuing to push and clean out the forward part of the passage straight ahead in Tartarus that was running up into a taller dome. Allan arrived a little after noon and started to work solo in Split Rock Cave.

We worked steadily all afternoon until 3:00 and then called it a day. Bryan was able to determine that the strait ahead passage up into a dome at the end of the big room by the headbanger rock was a dead end as seen in the photo. Scott's hard work net-



ted us eight feet down the middle of the right lead. He could not see any new voids further ahead. Allan reported that he had gotten in a couple more feet digging solo straight ahead in Split Rock and he said it is still going.

We gathered up our gear and headed back up to our vehicles in the lower parking lot. It was nice that Bryan had been able to drive his truck down into the park. He had four wheel drive in his truck so we were able to load up the back of his truck with the gear that had to go back to the storage trailer. Bryan and I drove to the storage trailer in his truck and put the gear away. We then made it back to the lower parking lot where we parked our vehicles and fortunately everyone was able to drive from there out of the park without getting stuck. I got the volunteer crew back by 4:00 and then headed out for a long trip home, ending my day.

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## Maribel—Headbanger Rocks No More

Submitted by Bryan Kleist

On February 1<sup>st</sup>. on a kind of spur of the moment thing, I decided to go to Maribel and work on a couple projects. I wanted to clear the new trail path that will be going thru to the Tartarus/

## Maribel—Headbanger Rocks No More (cont'd)

Split Rock caves on a new lower bluff trail. I arrived at the park around 9:30AM and worked on clearing and cutting up downed trees until around 12:30PM. Three brush piles were created from all the debris that was in the way. I also trimmed back some of the lower dead branches from the cedar trees that would be along the new path. At 12:30PM I took an hour lunch break. After lunch I drove my Traxter down to the trailer and loaded up the dig tray. For the rest of the afternoon I worked on digging out more sediment from the right going lead in Tartarus. I was curious to know how far back the left side of the right going passage went. A small quarter inch void was present near a small ceiling dome in the passage so I dug in that direction. I dug a hole about 12" in diameter up against the ceiling and was able to go back about 3' before I hit a lighter white to cream colored sediment which usually indicates you are close to hitting rock wall. It looks like there will be a lot of sediment that needs to come out of the left side of the passage. There may even be a passage that goes off in that direction. I worked until 6:30PM and took out 16 tray loads with 5 pails on the tray each time. A total of 8 hrs. of volunteer time was logged.

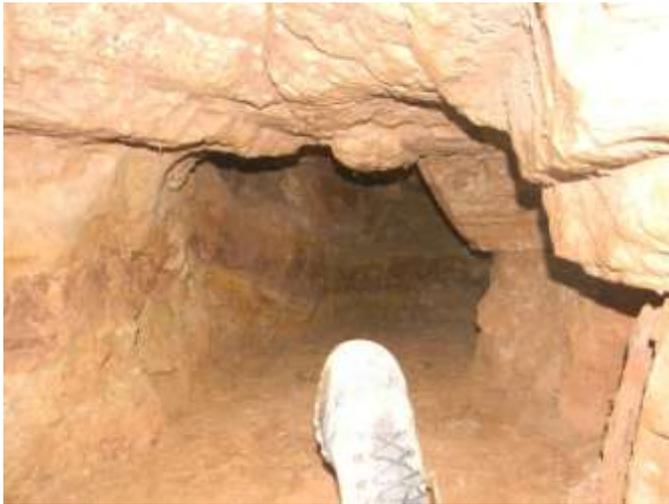
On February 4<sup>th</sup> a scheduled dig was set up at Maribel for working in Tartarus and Split Rock caves. The scheduled start time was 8:00AM. I arrived at 7:45AM to find Brad Graf waiting in front of the gate. The gate was opened and we drove down to the parking lot. Brad and I no sooner stepped out of our vehicles and Gary Soule arrived as well. The three of us chatted a bit and then Gary and I drove down to the trailer where we loaded up the dig tray, grabbed some pails and a few tools. In the meantime Brad took a few trips down to the caves with the necessary gear we would need for the day. I brought along my ball cart which is rated for hauling a maximum of 1800 lbs. It is basically an oversized hand dolly. Most people would use it to move around balled and burlapped trees. I like to use it for moving around large rocks when I build rock gardens or water features. We had a large 300–350 lb. flat limestone rock to move at the top of the staircase going down to the caves. It was a nice step rock that had come over from New Hope Cave. We rolled the rock onto the cart and ratchet strapped it tight to the cart and slowly lowered it down the steps. We then took it over by Tartarus and placed it as a stepping stone going up the bluff to the entrance of the cave. We also moved a rock off the edge of the trail by Split Rock and used it as a stepping stone in front of Tartarus as well. The two stones will work temporarily until they are properly placed once the frost is out of the ground.

Once we were finally set up to start some digging, I took up lead dig, Gary positioned himself in his favorite spot within the passage, and Brad worked outside pulling the dig tray out. The goal was to get the right side wall sediment cleared out from the right going lead. At around 9:00AM Tony Kroes arrived and he worked on chiseling out a few trouble spots along the walls of the passage. After that Tony went back to inspect how secure the headbanger rock was as well as the ceiling rock between the headbanger and the dead end dome. It was determined that the ceiling rock in that area had to be removed for safety reasons. Tony started working on removing the ceiling rock between the headbanger and the dead end dome. Gary decided to crawl back from where he was to watch the stones fall down. With a minimal amount of effort the large rocks fell. Next up was the head-

banger rock which presented a bit more of a challenge. Tony found a couple spots where he could hammer a chisel into the fracture point between the secure upper ceiling rock layer and the lesser secure headbanger rock. Every once in a while Tony would stop hammering and listen to the sound the headbanger rock would make as it was separating from the secure upper ceiling. This was an eerie sound and many times I thought the rock would just give way and drop, but it didn't. Since it took some time for Tony to fell the headbanger, Gary decided to go over and help Al Schema work in Split Rock. Al arrived around 10:00AM. I decided to stay and spot for Tony for safety reasons. After some time of inactivity I caught a chill and just had to get out of the cave and move around. Brad was switching back and forth between helping in Split Rock and then Tartarus. I called back to Brad and he crawled in to continue spotting for Tony while I was gone. I decided to go back to the parking lot for lunch around 12:30PM and hoped the walk back would warm me up. It didn't, so I started the truck up and cranked the heat. At 1:00PM I noticed Tony walking up the trail. He decided to take a short lunch. The headbanger was stubborn and still had not fallen. 15 minutes later Tony was headed back down the trail to accomplish his goal. At 1:30PM I finally stopped shaking and headed back down to the caves as well. Tony continued to alternate chisel locations along the fracture void. He would hammer for short periods of time and then listen to the rock. This went on for quite a bit of time and then all at once there was a tremendous thud sound and the headbanger was instantaneously on the passage floor. Tony let out a loud WOO HOO and the head-



banger was down for good. I was amazed by how large the rock was. It took up the whole passage floor. The headbanger was broken up and we took out about 10 tray loads of rock. It will be nice that we finally have those ceiling rocks removed. Not only did they pose a safety hazard but it was difficult navigating and working in that location of the passage. The floor of the passage slopes to the left where these rocks were located. Water pools here so in order to stay dry you had to crawl under the headbanger in order to get to the other side. That only left you with 21" ceiling to floor. With those rocks removed we now have a good three feet of height. Once the rock was removed I returned to digging the right side out from the right going lead. We were able to gain about 8' of distance, cleaned right to the rock wall (see photo on next page).



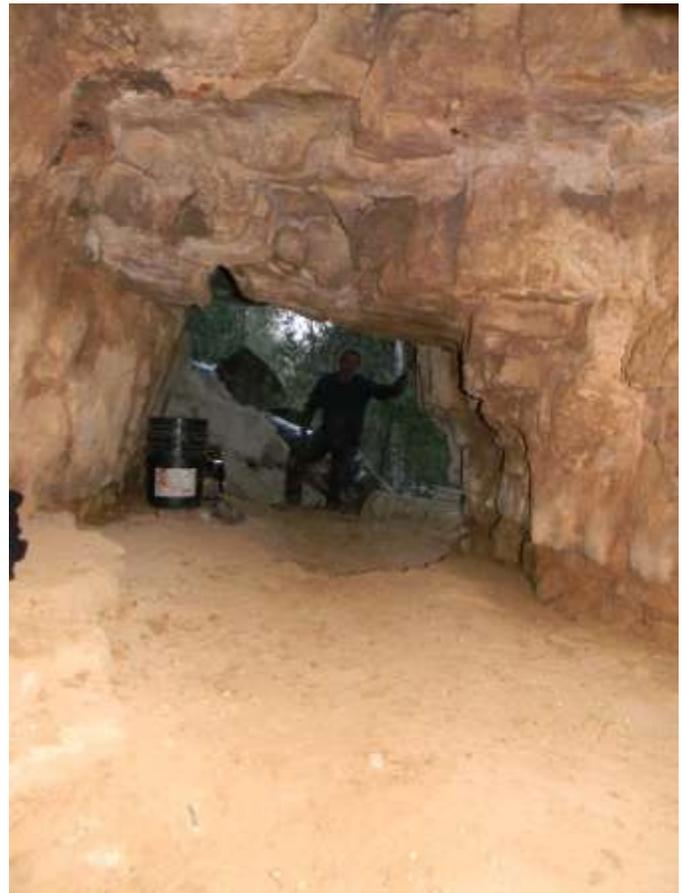
Over in Split Rock they were able to remove a couple larger rocks that were in the way of the going passage. Hiding behind them in the distance were small stalactites and flowstone on the walls. The void was very small so it was hard to see much. There was one rock in the middle that just did not want to budge so it was decided to leave it until the next dig. I remember looking in before we left for the day. It appeared that the passage would open up into a much wider room. The rock in the middle



was concealing what was behind it. Maybe it would be a passage that splits or maybe the passage just widens out more. Al reports we cleared the main passage 8 feet straight ahead and the passage is holding an average diameter of 3 by 3 feet. The newly discovered end room has bat bones in it, and live, dripping stalactites. Another small side dome room was discovered on the left side of the passage at about 35 feet in from the entrance.

An interesting view from the inside of the passage looking out can be seen in the final photo. Photos courtesy of Al Schema.

Tony and Brad left around 3:30PM. Dave Scheffer stopped by briefly during the afternoon to check things out. Al, Gary, and I talked a bit in the parking lot and left around 4:30PM. We logged thirty-six and one quarter hours of volunteer time.



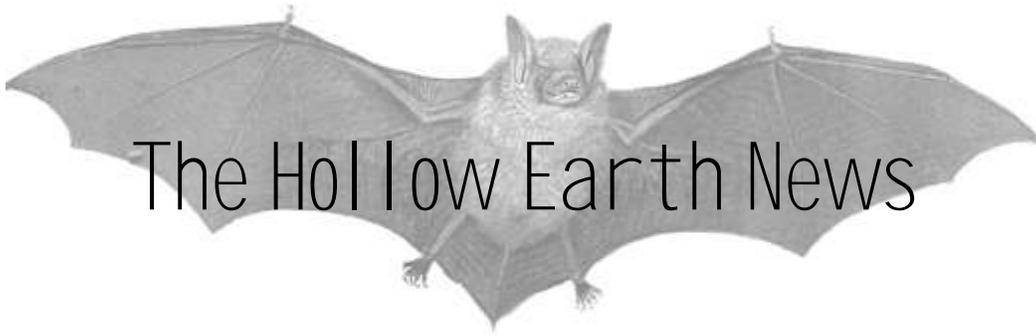
## Wisconsin Speleological Society

### St. Patrick's Day Recruitment extravaganza

Saturday, March 17<sup>th</sup>, 2012  
at 10:00 am

University of Wisconsin-Fox Valley  
Room 1551  
1478 Midway Road, Menasha

See Caving Calendar, page 3 for more info



# The Hollow Earth News

**REMINDER:** WSS Membership dues are due by May 31. If you are receiving the paper copy of the newsletter, and your address is highlighted in yellow, your membership is due. Members who receive only the electronic version of the newsletter will be contacted via email.

***The Hollow Earth News***

Karen Fiske  
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Prairie du Sac, WI 53578



**Don Kollath working to get into the end room of the West Passage, Maribel New Hope Cave, Maribel, Wisconsin.**  
Photo courtesy of Al Schema.