

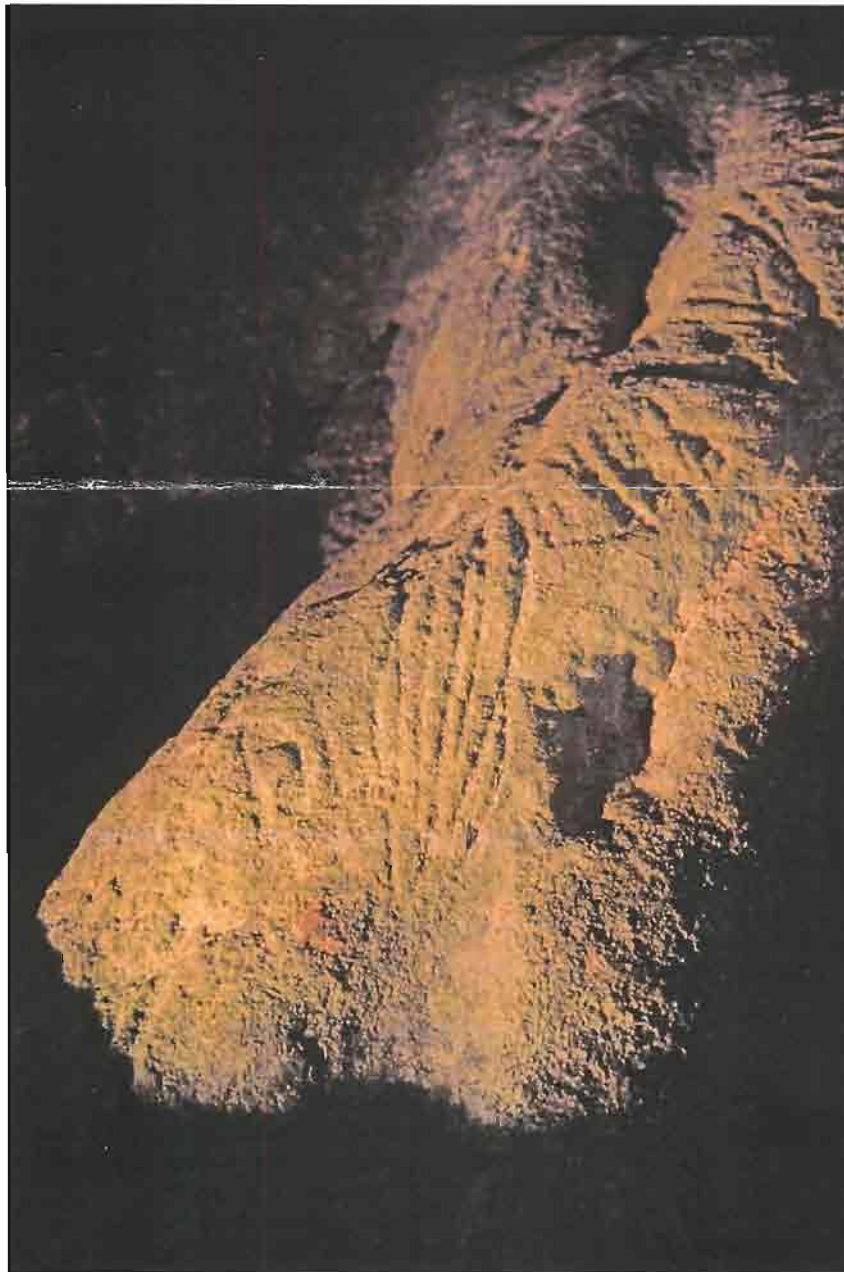
# The Open Cave

The Newsletter of the West Virginia Cave Conservancy

Number 10

Fall 2005

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Averie Giles-Allnock

# WEST VIRGINIA CAVE CONSERVANCY

*"Preserving the cave and karst resources of West Virginia for future generations"*

Number 10

Fall 2005

The West Virginia Cave Conservancy is a non-profit, 501(c)3 organization. All contributions to the Conservancy are tax-deductible. Please send all contributions and dues to: WVCC, Inc., PO Box 243, Frankford, WV 24938. For more information on membership, visit our Web site at [www.wvcc.net](http://www.wvcc.net). Please send all contributions to the newsletter to the newsletter editor. Any internal organization of the NSS has permission to reprint materials in this newsletter with proper recognition given to the author and *The Open Cave*.

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**Note to Members:** Annual memberships expire on anniversary date of initial membership. Be sure to check your address label for anniversary date.

## WVCC Officers and Departments

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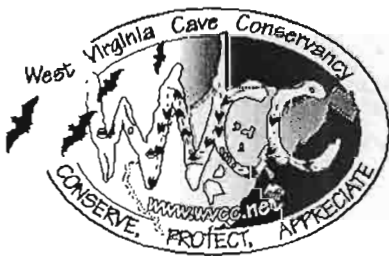
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## Calendar

Saturday, January 28, 2006

### WVCC Board of Directors Meeting

Lewisburg, WV. The meeting begins at 1:00 p.m. at Lost World Caverns.

Saturday, April 29, 2006

### WVCC Board of Directors Meeting

Grand Caverns Regional Park, Grottoes, VA. The meeting will be held on the Saturday of Spring VAR at 11:00 a.m. in the Stone Lodge.

Saturday, June 10, 2006

### Donaldson Cave Cleanup

A cave about 1 1/2 hours from the D.C. area. Contact Pauline Apling at [papling@verizon.net](mailto:papling@verizon.net) or 301-604-0764 for more information.

Saturday, July 15, 2006

### Haynes Cave Cleanup

There will be a cleanup of Haynes Cave, an interesting cave in Monroe County, WV. Check the Web site at <http://www.wvcc.net> later for more information. Trip organized by Fred Grady and Pauline Apling. Contact Pauline Apling <[papling@verizon.net](mailto:papling@verizon.net)> or 301-604-0764.

Sunday, July 16, 2006

### WVCC Board of Directors Meeting

Lewisburg, WV. The meeting begins at 10:00 a.m. at Lost World Caverns.

Saturday, November 11, 2006

### Annual WVCC Banquet

Lewisburg, WV. Details to be announced.

Sunday, November 12, 2006

### WVCC Board of Directors Meeting

Lewisburg, WV. The meeting begins at 9:30 a.m. at Lost World Caverns.

## WVCC Thanks Its Outgoing Personnel

By Jeff Bray, WVCC President

The WVCC is going through some changes. First, we are sad to announce the resignation of one of our board members, Lonnie Burns. Lonnie has been a great asset to the Conservancy since it started, and has been involved in a number of projects, including the construction of the fence at the Lipps Entrance to Organ Cave, various work at the Lightner Cave Preserve, organizing the games we all enjoyed at this year's banquet, being solely responsible for the "silly awards" given out at each banquet over the past 7 years, and a great deal of other countless (and often times thankless) jobs. As with many volunteers, a time comes to move on, and Lonnie felt that time was now. He deserves a huge thank you for all his work and support over the years.

We also are sad to announce the resignation of our membership secretary and treasurer, Ruth Williams. Even though some of you may not have met her, most of you have had correspondence with her. She has been keeping our books and communicating with the membership via mail over the past 4 years. Your membership forms, donations, and most other

correspondence has gone past her desk over the past many months. She has done a wonderful job keeping our financial records straight and informing us when our aspirations may not match our checkbook! Each of these positions is very demanding and time consuming, and Ruth was a real saint to be able to take care of both of them for such a long time. Unfortunately for the WVCC, she has decided that there is a need for more time away from the computer, and I can't say that I blame her—she puts in tons of hours for us!

Along those lines, the WVCC would like to welcome some "new blood" to fill Ruth's shoes. Bob Hoke has come aboard to be our new treasurer. His experience is tremendous and I believe he is going to be a great asset to our organization. His wife, Pauline Apling (a current WVCC board member), has taken on the position of membership secretary and will be the new person that many of you will be corresponding with via your membership renewals. Welcome aboard, and thank you both for your help! And again, thank you to Lonnie and Ruth for jobs well done!



WVCC Tent at the Old Timers' Reunion 2005.  
(Photograph by Meredith Hall Johnson)

# Rapps Cave Archeological Report

By Bob Handley

Photographs by Averie Giles-Allnock

The Draft Report (Report) was presented to the WVCC Board meeting on November 12, 2005. Various members of the Board seemed very happy to see evidence of the completed project. The Report was edited by Drs. Kim McBride (University of Kentucky at Lexington) and Sarah Sherwood (University of Tennessee at Knoxville) and nine contributors. There are 11 Chapters and 2 Appendices. The chapters are: Introduction, Culture History Context, Prehistoric Cave Art, Previous Investigations, Auger Testing and Test Unit Excavations, Human Remains, Ceramic Analysis, Analysis of Stone Tools, Faunal Identification, Archeobotanical Remains, and Summary and Recommendations.

Ten formal test units were excavated, eight inside the main entrance room and two outside the entrance but inside the fence. From the material found during the study, the Report indicates that ceramics were used in Rapps Cave from 80 AD (Middle Woodland) to 1200–1400 AD (Late Prehistoric). The 80 AD date was obtained by C-14 dating of charred remains on several pot shards. The 1200 AD to 1400 AD dates are representative of other previously dated ceramics used during that period. The Indians who used the cave came from the south, not from the north or west.

There were 31 individual cave art images found. Indications are that they were made during the same period that corresponded to most of the pottery fragments—1200 to 1400 AD. Similar images have been found in TAG Area caves. The Rapps petroglyphs are the most northern cave art of this sort to be found.

The fragmentary remains of six humans were found: five adults and one subadult. These remains were recorded and buried in the bottom of one of the excavated units near the entrance following a burial service. One human skeleton is said to have been removed from the cave, along with quite a collection of ceramics and other artifacts in the early 1970s. The ceramics and other artifacts are in a private collection. The location of the skeleton is unknown at this time. The remains of hickory, grape, blackberry,

deerberry, and pokeberry plants were found. The animals found were bats, dogs/wolves/foxes, woodchucks, fox squirrels, beaver, rabbit, and deer. Turkey and owls were the bird remains found. Also remains of fish, snakes, turtles, and freshwater mollusks were found. A reed torch, found deep in the cave, was C-14 dated to 80 AD. A few stone tools (a celt and an axe) and projectile points were found that range in age from 6000 BC to 1750 AD. The area where these various remains were found was severely disturbed on the surface and in most of the test holes. The area was most likely disturbed by humans, ground hogs, or erosion.

## Recommendations

“The most sensitive area that could benefit from further investigation, as well as continued protection, includes the area just inside the entrance. A larger excavation block in this area might reveal diagnostic artifacts in association with hearth features, or provide materials for more precise dating of the Late Prehistoric occupation represented by the ceramics. This area also needs to be protected since the human remains collected during the study were buried there.”

“Another sensitive area is just outside the



entrance, where more work could contribute to an understanding of the complex stratigraphic relationships revealed in the excavation in this area and the changing configuration of the cave entrance.” At this time no further disturbance to the surface inside the fence should occur. An occasional mowing of weeds is okay.

“The most cost-effective measures to recover additional data from Rapps Cave may not involve further excavation, but rather efforts to locate and safeguard previously collected material. Renewed efforts to locate the ceramics collected by John Rutherford, Jr. and the extensive material collected from the cave in the early 1970s would be worthwhile. If possible these should be curated at the North House Museum along with materials from the present study. If a more precise date could be placed on the early 1970s collecting, more intensive efforts should also be made to locate the skeleton possibly given to the West Virginia Medical Examiner’s Office. The possibility that this skeleton has somehow made its way into the state collection (now at Moundsville) should also be investigated.”

“The most important step is continued protection of the cave from looting or vandalism. The petroglyphs are especially important, and in their exposed state, are highly sensitive. The benefit of any activities at the cave should be weighed against the inherent dangers of drawing more attention to it, including the attention of persons who might not respect the fragile nature of these resources. Given the limited understanding of the distribution of this cave art in West Virginia, and the fact that these glyphs are currently the northern boundary of the tradition in terms of professional study and documentation, any additional glyphs that come to light should receive documentation and protection.” The cave is now closed pending completion of negotiations for renewing the WVCC lease.

Any future archeological studies done at Rapps Cave must again go through the lengthy series of meetings and permitting procedure required by The West Virginia Department of Culture and History.



The authors of the various chapters are:

Dr. Alan Cressler  
 Dr. Nicholas Herrmann  
 J. David McBride  
 Dr. Kim A. McBride  
 Dr. Robert Maslowski  
 Meta Pike  
 Dr. Sarah C. Sherwood  
 Dr. Judith A. Sichler  
 Dr. Jan Simek



## Donaldson Cleanup Trip

August 6, 2005

By Pauline Apling

Photographs by Meredith Hall Johnson

I wasn't sure how many cavers would be on the cleanup trip and I was pleasantly surprised to see 11 people show up. It was a nice morning for a cave cleanup trip. I had planned to attach a new pocket on to the kiosk to add more brochures, but found out that there was already a mailbox attached to the kiosk and it was full of various caving brochures.

I'm glad Rachel Shively was on the trip because she was able to put her head through the gate rungs to reach the combination lock and open the gate for all of us. We entered the cave and decided to secure a handline for the lower section on the left side of the cave. Rachel secured the handline for us and we headed down to that part of the cave. You go a short distance and then there is a climb-up. At the very top section there were a few signatures from the 1800s. We need to document those by making a list of the various signatures. Meredith did take some photos of the signatures.

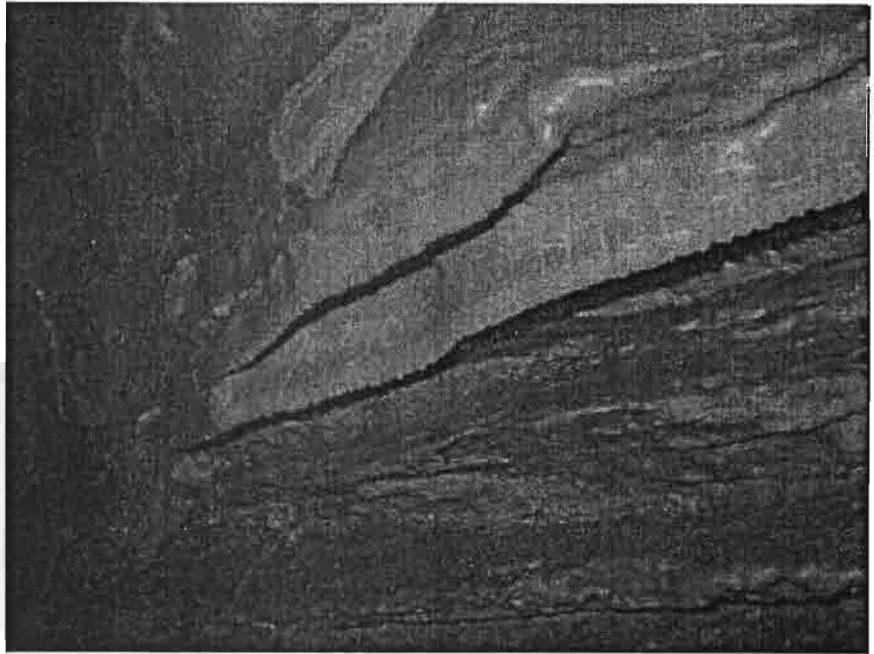
The group kind of split up. A couple of us went down to a low section of the cave and discovered a rusty rain barrel wedged between some rocks. We may need some tools on the next cleanup trip to dislodge the barrel and remove it from the cave.

We went to the right side of the cave and the duck under area was completely dry but very muddy. There were two large "out" arrows that I removed on the way out.

There is a way to do a loop trip from one of the back sections out to the front of the cave; Bob Bennett and Eric Berge were able to find that and go through the crawlway. Most everyone went that way so they could experience a new passage in the cave.

In the very back of the cave, Meredith found a long beautiful cave bacon formation with graffiti etched into it. I couldn't believe someone would etch his name into a beautiful formation like that. I don't think we can remove it since it may harm the formation.

We picked up glass in one of the passages and in the front entrance area of the cave. We must have had three small bags of glass; I think you could spend a



*Graffiti on bacon in Donaldson Cave.*

lifetime picking up glass in that cave.

We talked about the possibility of doing a biological survey of the cave. We need a cave biology expert to accompany us on a future trip. And we are planning a spring cleanup trip in Donaldson, possibly near the middle of June 2006.

The trip participants were: Pauline Apling, Bob Bennett, Eric Berge and son

Earle Berge, Jeff Jahn and daughter Sharon Jahn, Meredith Hall Johnson, Twila Neeld, Roxanne Shively and daughter Rachel Shively, and Janet Tinkham.

Thanks to everyone for participating in the cleanup. Thanks to everyone who brought refreshments for after the trip. Be sure to watch the caving calendar for a biology and a cleanup trip in 2006.



*Rachel Shively and Pauline Apling at the WVCC kiosk near the entrance of Donaldson Cave.*

## WVCC Hosts Alien Invasion

Article and photographs by Alex Sproul

They swooped down on us in early April. The aliens were a British camera crew doing a show for the Discovery Channel, and they wanted to be taken to a nice (and convenient) cave.

A cryptic phone call from a gal in the UK asked if I could take their crew to film an interview segment with a biologist. I volunteered Island Ford Cave (IFC) as being conveniently accessible and since it did have some cool cave critters in the back.

The next weekend, I, along with Jeff Bray and John Pearson, rendezvoused with the crew at IFC. The team—Nigel Kinnings, videographer; Stephen Kemp, sound man; and Anna Abbott, producer—were from WAG Productions (UK), which does a lot of work for Discovery. They had flown in their “biologist” from Jacksonville, Florida, an eccentric fellow by the name of Dennis Crenshaw, and picked him up in Charleston. They were all very pleasant and easy-going.

But they weren't happy with IFC because of the excessive road noise from the adjacent Interstate highway, so we quickly came up with an alternate plan.

Higginbothams Cave, near Frankford, was the new site we chose for its picturesque entrance and easy access, and Bill Balfour joined us there.

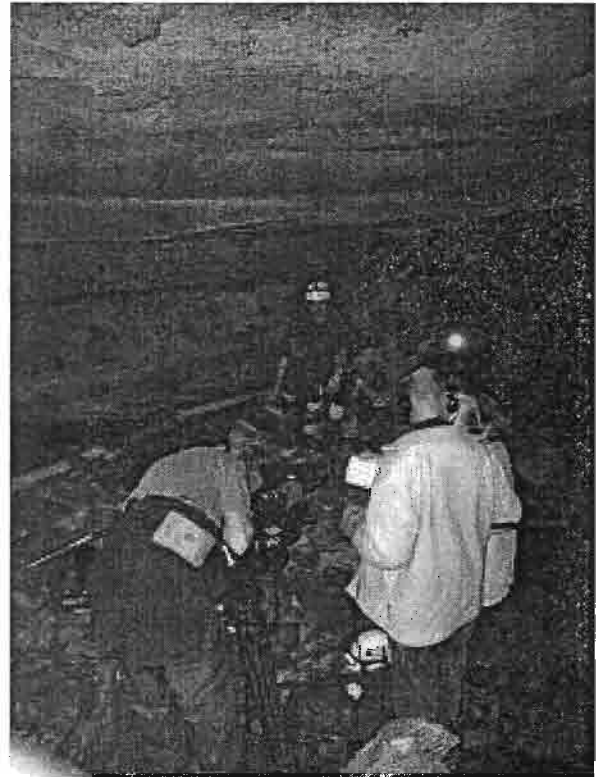
The crew set up its gear just inside the entrance and positioned Crenshaw on a rock for his talking head bit. It quickly became apparent that this was no environmental film in progress. Anna finally admitted that the piece was actually about unexplained phenomena, and Crenshaw was not a biologist but an insulation salesman and self-styled UFO expert. He rambled on about extraterrestrials for 45 minutes while the camera whirred and the cavers were banished to the world of sunshine.

We had been duped, but we didn't mind because everybody was having fun and enjoying the cool cave and warm, sunny day.

The crew wanted a cutaway shot of Crenshaw entering the cave, and

Higginbothams didn't lend itself to that, so we relocated to the “Balfour Entrance” of Culversons (now in Bill's backyard) with its impressive maw.

We parted company late in the day, with everyone having fulfilled their objectives. Our visitors were clearly impressed with caves and caver hospitality, so it is our hope that they'll think of us the next time they're doing something about CAVES.



*Crenshaw, Kinnings, Kemp in Higginbothams.*



*Crenshaw, Abbott, Kinnings, Kemp, Pearson, Balfour, Sproul in Culverson/Balfour.*

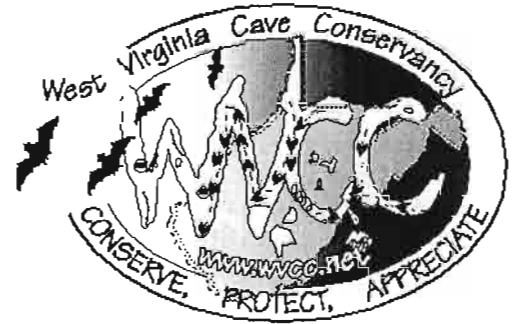
# Monongahela National Forest Letter From the President

By Jeff Bray, WVCC President

## West Virginia Cave Conservancy

P.O. Box 243  
Frankford, WV 24938

November 12, 2005



Monongahela National Forest  
Attn: Forest Plan Revisions  
200 Sycamore Street  
Elkins, WV 26241

Dear Monongahela Forest Planning Team;

I am speaking for the West Virginia Cave Conservancy (WVCC) which is a not-for-profit 501(c)3 corporation chartered in West Virginia for the purpose of acquiring cave property by various means. Our Mission is to Conserve and Maintain the cave and karst resources of West Virginia and Virginia for future generations. I appreciate the opportunity to comment on the Monongahela National Forest Draft Management Plan.

My comments on the Draft Management Plan (Plan) concern the non-game wildlife karst resources that live in the caves of the Monongahela National Forest (MNF). You list 26 RFSS species that have been found (24), or could be found (2) in MNF caves. Your Goal WF01 (p. II-25) seems adequate but there is no specific Objective, Standard, or Guideline for the karst species as there is for fish, migrating birds, raptor nests, et cetera. Research is not complete and these karst species are out of sight – Out of mind, but we don't want them to be forgotten. Additions similar to WF10, WF14, and WF19 would be appropriate to keep silt and other pollutants (insecticides, herbicides, and soil amendments) from entering caves. The watersheds of small streams that run into caves and/or sinkholes (or sinkholes in general) are the primary areas of concern for preserving cave habitats for karst species.

Caves are also a part of our heritage, the same as other surface features and historic sites. They are in general older than any of the works of man. Some of them have been used by humans as a water source, shelter, hideouts, manufacturing sites, mineral extraction (gypsum crystals), scientific study, and recreation. Each cave is unique but many are not significant. Only a small number that exist have been found to date.

WVCC has endorsed the Wilderness Coalition's list of 15 proposed new Wilderness areas believing that permanent protection is appropriate while there are still special areas left to protect. We have an on-going, though not yet complete, project to identify known caves in these areas. We do appreciate your help in providing a map showing limestone outcrops in the forest. Hopefully this project will be completed in the near future so we can help pinpoint cave locations in other parts of the forest.

So far as the Plan is concerned, we would prefer an amended Alternative #3 which provides more balance throughout the Management Prescriptions, and less air and water pollution than Alternative #2.

Thanks for allowing comments from a concerned and interested public.

Sincerely,

Jeff Bray, President



## Explanation of the President's Letter...

By Bob Handley, WVCC Director

This is written to explain, in detail, what is abbreviated in the letter to the Monongahela National Forest (MNF) that Jeff Bray sent dated November 12, 2005. The MNF is in the process of revising its forest management plan (Plan) and have invited public comments. Jeff's letter is WVCC's comment concerning the omission of cave biota management details. The suggested additions would help protect Regional Forester Sensitive Species (RFSS) that have been found in MNF caves.

The Appendix to the Draft Environmental Impact Statement lists 24 RFSS that have been found in MNF caves and 2 others that probably will be found. These critters are cave amphipods, isopods, millipedes, springtails, crayfish, beetles, spiders, and the Allegheny Wood rat. The two that might be found are the Grand Caverns and Luray Caverns blind cave millipedes. Most of these were ranked F1: Critical = 5 or fewer occurrences or less than 1,000 individuals, which is the Forest's rank.

In the Wildlife and Fish section of the Plan, the applicable Goal is WF01. The Management Direction Description (MDD) states:

"Provide habitat diversity that supports viable populations of native and desired non-native wildlife and fish species ... and keeps RFSS from a trend toward Federal listing.

a) During watershed or project-level analysis, identify and prioritize opportunities to maintain or restore habitat for RFSS, Birds of Conservation Concern, and other species of interest.

b) Within watershed-level planning units, maintain, enhance, or restore representative examples of habitats that would be expected under unmanaged conditions, to the extent allowed

by land ownership patterns, existing conditions, and management prescription emphasis."

The missing Objective, which needs to be added, would be similar to WF10. The MDD for WF10 is:

"Maintain at least 560 miles of coldwater stream habitat capable of supporting wild, naturally producing Brook Trout, a Management Indicator Species"(MIS).

(Adding this objective may be a problem since the only Objectives listed are for MIS. MIS are the critters they keep track of to keep their plan on track. [Native, naturally reproducing Brook Trout, Cerulean Warbler, Wild Turkey, and WV Northern Flying Squirrel] —rhh )

The missing Standard, which needs to be added, would be similar to WF14. The MDD for WF14 is:

"When activities are proposed near a known active raptor nest, a wildlife biologist shall be consulted for measures to avoid or mitigate disturbance."

(There's no mention of MIS in the Standards. —rhh )

The missing Guideline, which needs to be added, would be similar to WF19. The MDD for WF19 is:

"Activities with the potential for causing adverse effects should be avoided or mitigated to the extent possible within ½ mile of active peregrine falcon nests. Seasonal closure orders may be used to control human disturbance in the vicinity of peregrine falcon nests."

(One of the existing Guidelines may be adequate—WF17—but in order to emphasize RFSS that live in caves, a separate Guideline seems more appropriate. —rhh)

The MDD for WF17 is:

"Use Forest Service-approved portions of Conservation Strategies and Agreements, as

appropriate, in the management of RFSS habitat to help keep management actions from contributing to a trend toward listing for these species."

The primary objective of all this, as stated in the letter, is "to keep silt and other pollutants from entering caves. The watersheds of small streams that run into caves and/or sinkholes ... are the primary areas of concern for preserving cave habitats for karst species."

MNF people who I've talked with speculated that the new plan would be issued by year's end or certainly by February or March 2006. There were a great number of comments sent in—some of them demanding rewrites of portions of the Draft Plan, i.e.: all of their economics appeared to be based on grossly exaggerated timber harvests. These harvest figures were used to estimate revenues, employment, impacts on local economies and on the environment, etc., and were then used to compare the economic benefits of cutting timber with the economic benefits of other forest uses. The new revised Plan will be the MNF's answer to all comments—there will be no individual replies.

Many thanks to all who sent in comments. The drive toward more declared Wilderness continues.

The next step is to get a bill through Congress. The entire West Virginia Delegation is on record as favoring the WV Wilderness Coalitions proposed 15 new Wilderness areas. Congress though will listen intently to what the MNF Plan recommends as Wilderness. Quite a few States have gotten Wilderness bills passed in the last five years and President Bush has signed them all.

Bats: The Virginia Big Eared Bat and the Indiana Bat are Federally endangered species and as such were covered in another section on Endangered Species. Craig Hindman (Chairman of VAR) sent in comments on these.

## West Virginia Cave Conservancy Banquet

By Ruth Williams

Photographs by Charlie Williams

The seventh annual West Virginia Cave Conservancy Banquet was held on Saturday, November 12 at the Fort Savannah Econo Lodge in Lewisburg, West Virginia. It was a sold-out event with 80 people attending.

The evening started out with a Social Hour at the bar with 50/50 tickets being sold and a dice game to earn tickets to win valuable prizes.

After the social hour, we went up to a buffet dinner catered by the Harvest Grille, complete with salad, chicken, vegetable medley, vegetarian lasagna, and a beef carving station. The dinner was tasty and plentiful.

After dinner, Jeff Bray, WVCC President, introduced the Board of Directors and acknowledged the Benefactors for the past year, including John Pearson, The Bassett Foundation, Dick Blenz, and Ruth Williams. Without the generous support of time and monetary donations from our membership, WVCC would not be able to fulfill its mission to buy and conserve caves for future generations.

Lonnie Burns then presented his annual "silly awards" with Ruth Williams and Lois Lindsay receiving Barbie Dolls seated at a desk "juggling the books" as any Treasurer of a non-profit organization has to do at times. Cliff Lindsay, Ed Swepston, and Bob Handley also received an award for their years of service to the Conservancy from its roots.

This was followed by a card game where you had to keep paying to stay in

the game with the prize being a pearl necklace that was donated to WVCC by local artist Marty Schaerer. Then came the live auction with guest auctioneer Kelley "Deacon" Deem. Various cave-related items along with some non-cave related items were auctioned to an eager audience spurred on by the auctioneer. After the successful games and auction, we were pleased to have Dr. Stephanie Schwabe as our guest speaker. Dr. Schwabe, of the Blue Holes Foundation ([www.blueholes.org](http://www.blueholes.org)), spoke on "Pigeons and Blue Holes" and educated us on the various ecosystems contained within the Blue Holes in the Bahamas and how they relate to caves and conservation of our natural resources.

If you were not able to join us this year, keep a look out for next year's Banquet information so you won't miss out on a great time socializing with fellow cavers and helping our Conservancy's causes.



Lois Lindsey and Ruth Williams with their awards.



Bob Handley with his award.



The card game.



WVCC Banquet.



John E. Pearson gets his hair cut to raise money.

# WVCC in 2005

## A Look at the Year in Pictures

Photographs by Meredith Hall Johnson  
(except where noted)



*Jeff Bray with t-shirts in the WVCC Tent.*

*The WVCC Tent is a good place to hang out. Here, Kelsea Johnson, Drew Simmons, Kevin Quick, and Matt Tretter discuss cave conservation. (left)*



*The bat cannon arrives at OTR..*



*The new sign to keep cars off the field and the information kiosk at the Lightner's Entrance to McClung Cave. (left)  
Photograph by John E. Pearson*

*Jeff Bray and Pam Malabad look at information to be posted at the Lightner's Entrance kiosk. (below left)*

*Pam Malabad posts information on the kiosk.*

*The bats come flying out of the bat cannon at OTR.*

*Photograph by Charlie Williams*



# The Open Cave

c/o WVCC  
PO Box 243  
Frankford, WV 24938



LIFE 2099/12  
Charles T. Williams  
21118 Deep Furrow Ct  
Ashburn VA 20147-5410

## FIRST CLASS MAIL

20147#5410



### West Virginia Cave Conservancy Membership Application

Mail to address above.

New Membership  Renewal

- # Regular Membership (\$15.00 per year)
  - # Family Membership (\$25.00 per year)
  - # Institutional Membership (\$50.00 per year)
  - # Lifetime Membership (\$250.00 one time fee)
  - # Benefactor Membership (\$1000 minimum)
  - # Sustaining Membership (See below\*\*)
- \*\*Sustaining Membership is \$65 per year for 5 years.  
Upon completing this, you will be a Lifetime Member.  
Authorizing a recurring credit card transaction can facilitate payment.

In addition to dues, I would like to make the following donation to support the work of WVCC.

Amount	Frequency
<input type="checkbox"/> # \$20.00	<input type="checkbox"/> # Single donation
<input type="checkbox"/> # \$50.00	<input type="checkbox"/> # Monthly
<input type="checkbox"/> # \$100.00	<input type="checkbox"/> # Quarterly
<input type="checkbox"/> # Other Amount \$ _____	<input type="checkbox"/> # Annually

#### Method of Payment

# Cash  # Check  # Visa  # MasterCard

#### Credit Card Authorization

Credit Card Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Exp Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_  
(By signing, you authorize WVCC to charge your account for the amount, frequency, and duration indicated above.)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone No: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Caving Affiliations: \_\_\_\_\_ NSS Number if member: \_\_\_\_\_

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