

Carbide Dump



November 2022
Vol 57, No 10

Marian

The *Carbide Dump* is published monthly by the Blue Ridge Grotto of the National Speleological Society in Roanoke, Virginia. Distribution date is approximately the second week of each month. An issue may be skipped if insufficient material is received. Contributions of articles and artwork are invited and will be gratefully acknowledged. Art work originals will be returned. Contributions should be sent to the editor. Regular and associate grotto membership (\$10) includes a *Carbide Dump* subscription. Subscriber rate is \$10.00. Exchanges with other grotto and caving organizations are invited. Direct exchange mail to Mary Sue Socky.

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The Blue Ridge Grotto holds its monthly meetings every third Friday of the month at 6:30p at Jersey Lily's Roadhouse, 1650 Braeburn Dr. Salem, VA 24153. See the Grotto meeting announcement in this issue.

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Contributors: David & Mary Sue Socky, Marian McConnell, Susan Burr, Bob Gulden, Meredith Weberg, Travis Coad, George Dasher, and Jerry Fuller.

Cover: Drawing of a *Pool in Greenbrier Poor Farm Cave, WV* by Marian McConnell.

CAVERS CALENDAR

Nov 18: BRG meeting, 6:30p, Jersey Lily's-Salem, VA. Elections!

Nov 25-27: *Rock and Mineral Show*, Salem Civic Center, 1001 Roanoke Blvd, Salem, VA. \$5.00 Adults; ticket good for all 3 days. Visit ROANOKE VALLEY MINERAL & GEM SOCIETY on Facebook for info (See p.81 this DUMP)

Dec 10: *WVACS XMAS Party*, at the WVACS Field station north of Frankford, WV. Dinner starts ~6pm. Contact Tisha Springer at 740-541-3558 or momtocsns@gmail.com for more info.

Dec. 18: *BRG Xmas Party*, Noon-5pm, Dave & Mary Socky's house, Roanoke, VA.

Jan 7, 2023: *Virginia Cave Board* meeting, 11a, site TBD. For info, see <https://www.dcr.virginia.gov/natural-heritage/cavehome>

Jan. 20, 2023: BRG meeting, 6:30p, Jersey Lily's-Salem, VA.

Feb. 17, 2023: BRG meeting, 6:30p, Jersey Lily's-Salem, VA.

June 19 to 23, 2023: *WVACS Convention Pre-Camp*, at the WVACS Field station north of Frankford in Greenbrier County, WV. For more information, contact Jessica Reep at jreep@aol.com

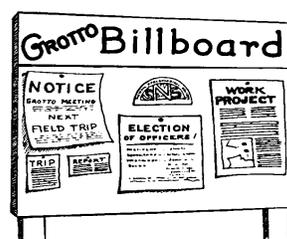
June 26-30, 2023: *NSS Convention*, Elkins, West Virginia. For more information, see their website at <https://nss2023.caves.org>, or contact Rich Geisler at richgeisler11@gmail.com or Meredith Hall Weberg at merecaver@yahoo.com

Summer 2024: *NSS Convention* in Sewanee, Tennessee.



Long Cave Lists

maintained by Bob Gulden
USA Long & Deep, World Long & Deep, & World Big Rooms
www.caverbob.com/usalong.htm
www.caverbob.com/usadeep.htm
www.caverbob.com/rooms.htm
www.caverbob.com/wlong.htm
www.caverbob.com/wdeep.htm



Treasurer's Report 11/11/2022

Cave Bucks	\$ 40.96
Conservation	\$ 1.00
Equipment	\$ 104.12
General	\$3,890.25
Total	\$4,036.33

ANNOUNCEMENTS

BRG Meeting Minutes – can be read on the BRG webpage at: <https://blueridgegrotto.org> under the ‘BRG Organization’ button.

NSS Membership:

Would you like to join or renew with the NSS? See this [link](#) for details.



2022 BRG Landowner Christmas Cards: Have been ordered! They may be here by the November meeting. What do they look like? See the **December 2022 CARBIDE DUMP cover!**

Friar’s Hole: WVCC bought property including the original entrance to Friar’s Hole — for cavers. (This is different from the Friar’s Hole Cave Preserve) BRG voted to donate \$50. WVCC says *Thanks!*

Beckley Exhibition Coal Mine has closed for the year. Maybe Blue Ridge Grotto & Greenbrier Grotto can visit when the mine re-opens in April 2023.

ACCA: At the Sept. 16 BRG meeting, the BRG membership voted to renew our dues with *American Cave Conservation Association* (ACCA) at the \$25.00 basic level.

Cave Bucks – Are voluntary donations from cavers who have recently been caving. Most people donate a few dollars for each cave trip they have been on. Then send the money where it will do some good and buy some caves!

Bat Cave Closures - We are now in **Winter Bat Cave Closure**. Some designated caves are closed so bat species can have critical habitat to hibernate. This closure affects some, but not all caves. If the cave you want to visit is closed, go elsewhere! There are thousands of caves in the Virginias.

- Winter closure for bat caves in **West Virginia is Sept 1—May 15.**
- Winter closure for bat caves in **Virginia is Oct 15 – April 15.**

Please respect all cave closures.

VAR CLOSED CAVE LIST UPDATES: lots of information needs to be updated. Please send changes, additions to Brad Blase blase@virginiacaves.org

BRG Meeting & Trips Notice

The **November 18, 2022** meeting of the Blue Ridge Grotto will be held at **Jersey Lily's Roadhouse 1650 Braeburn Dr, Salem, VA 24153**. Dinner or appetizers with socializing starts at 6:30pm with the meeting starting soon after. Elections will occur.

The program this month will be a slide program of various cave trips by Dave Socky.

Grotto Trip

To Be Determined

Membership

Blue Ridge Grotto currently has 56 members and 6 subscribers.

Old BRG Members, past BRG Members – if you were previously a member of BRG and left in good standing, your membership can easily be activated: fill out and sign the BRG Membership Agreement and pay your \$10.00 annual dues to the Treasurer.

Know of a potential caver? Bring them to a BRG meeting, sponsor them on a BRG activity, do lots of fun things with the best cavers around ~

Membership Updates

Kelly Perkins NSS 71972
Congratulations on becoming an NSS member!

Joe Banks
252-531-4453 C

Need a BRG Membership list to keep in contact? See the grotto secretary.



Formations in Echo Junction of Wishing Well Cave, VA taken during the Fall 2022 VAR. Photo by Dave Socky



Owl Cave, VA

By *Mary Sue Socky*

Fall VAR, October 21-23, 2022, was held at the RASS property in Bath Co., VA.

180 people attended. It did not rain. The night sky was incredible, with planets, the Milky Way, and a promise of meteor showers. (Forget the meteors – it was too cold!!!)

It was **BITTER COLD** at night! How cold was it?

- It was a quiet VAR – the partiers huddled around the bonfire, then went to bed early in the hope of warming up.
- Cavers were running their Zebra lights on high for a few minutes, then switching them off and throwing the now-warm light into the bottom of their sleeping bags to warm their feet up.
- My ‘night light’ began sending SOS signals - until the battery died.
- My key fob refused to work, and I was locked in the car. Dave had to ‘chirp’ me out of the car with his control.
- My cup of lemonade **FROZE**.

However, the days were gorgeous and sunny. So, a bunch of us decided to visit **Owl Cave, VA** and **Water Sinks, VA** –



Owl Cave double entrance. Photo by Meredith Weberg



Group photo in front of Owl Cave. Photo by Meredith Weberg

both are on Phil and Charlotte Lucas’ property, which was not too far away from VAR.

Doug Duncan, Roxanne Shively, Travertine (their dog), Roxanne’s daughter Rachel; Rachel’s 4-year-old son Leon, Meredith Weberg, Charles Kahn, Josh Babcock, and Mary Sue Socky headed to the double entrance of **Owl Cave**.

I visited Owl Cave years ago, with Phil Lucas, Dave Socky and some BRG folk. That was a quick and fun through-trip; in the natural entrance and out the back-door culvert. That was what I was expecting. Haha.

Instead, our group had a good 2-hour muddy workout exploring the many levels of Owl Cave. Meredith and I admired the numerous crinoids and stromatolites fossils in the cave walls. We also saw some healthy Big Brown bats. We walked, stooped, and hands-and-knees crawled. – Except for Leon and Travertine. The shortest ones on the trip, they both walked everywhere. Trav was an excellent caver and did not let humans stop her. We were in a crawl, and suddenly this small caver/animal runs up my back and along side of me on her way to find her owner. Yes, I was startled. Now I know how sheep feel when the sheepdog runs on top of them.

Everyone enjoyed caving with Leon. He was a thoughtful and energetic young caver, and extremely loyal, too. He told his mom where we hid her pack! Eventually, we gave up trying to find the culvert entrance, exited, and drove around to the other side of the hill.

Phil and Charlotte have created a Karst and Art Preserve for visitors to their property. There are karst features, sculptures, and dragons everywhere! At **Water Sinks**, there is an accessible deck trail through the cave. Numerous alcoves give you a good view of the sink-hole, or access to the outside and to **The Subway** section of Water Sinks. There is also a huge karst jungle gym area to climb around on, enticing trails, and a swinging bridge!

We got back to the RASS property in plenty of time for relaxing and dinner, a party, and of course that was the night my lemonade froze. Not to worry – after two weeks, I think everyone has *finally* warmed up!

Thank you, VPI Cave Club, for hosting Fall VAR.

Thank you, RASS, for providing a wonderful site for cavers to gather!



Island Ford Cave

By *Marian McConnell*

We had a most excellent trip into Island Ford Cave on Saturday, November 5, 2022. There were 8 of us; me, Mary Sue Socky, Sharon Bruce, Lisa and Charles Graves, Melissa and Frank Maddox, and their friend Yosh from Liberty U. Med School.

It was great seeing our long-time caving buddy, Sharon. And all the newbies did GREAT!

We did the usual passages from the entrance, and everyone made it across the step-across, and all the way to the spring at the back for "lunch."

Mary Sue and I took turns leading, and everyone did a great job of spotting and helping each other in the tricky spots.

We did run into one small group of 4 from Liberty University.

We did not see any bats, salamanders, or crayfish.

On the way back, we all made it down the butt crack slide; then Sharon, Mary Sue, and Lisa headed out the way we came in, while the rest of us went out via the canyon passage.

It was challenging and fun and it did get a little "damp" for a couple of us. Everyone did great individually and as a team. And we all made it out safely. 



Before group photo.
Photo by Marian McConnell



After group photo.
Photo by Marian McConnell

PAY YER 2023 DUES!!

It's that time. Current BRG members and BRG Subscribers:

- 2023 BRG dues are \$10.00 for regular or associate members, \$5.00 for additional family members. Discount for members under 18. Subscriber fee is \$10.00 per person.
- Make checks to *Blue Ridge Grotto*.
- Families, additional dues payers – there will be printed info on your family rate at the BRG meeting.
- If you mail in your dues, please include a piece of paper with your current address, phones, email, NSS number (and NSS expiration month), and primary grotto affiliation.
- You can pay for multiple years.

Pay your dues at the November 18, 2022 BRG meeting, the December 18 Winter Get-Together, or mail them to:

David Socky, BRG Treasurer
6572 Woodbrook Dr.
Roanoke, VA 24018

Can't remember if you've already paid?
We do! Check the pre-paid list.

Lauren Appel - 2023
Colin Beck - 2023
Sharon Bruce - 2024
Joseph Caldwell - 2026
Carl Cornett - 2024
Miriam Cuddington - 2032
Martin DiLeggi - 2023
Carrie Douplik - 2024
Joey Fagan - Life
Cheryl Feller - 2023
Doug Feller - 2023
Cole Frantz - 2023
Keith Goggin - 2024

Lisa Goggin - 2024
Gene Harrison - 2032
Jessica Hester - 2023
Jeff Huffman - 2030
Kelsea Johnson - 2023
Kevin Johnson - 2025
Randy Michael - 2023
Sharon Mohney - 2023
Lynn Ott - 2032
Duane Owen - 2023
Jenn Perdue - 2023
David Rose - 2023
Suzanne Rose - 2023
Ed Saugstad - 2024
Marianne Saugstad - 2024
Gordon Smith - 2023
Alex Sproul - 2023
Jennifer Suggs - 2023
John Taylor - 2023
Bob Thren - 2023
Meredith Weberg - 2023
David Wickersham - 2023
Brian Williams - 2023

Not a BRG member? Ask any officer how to begin the membership process.

Bone Cave Trip Report

Article and Photos By *Susan Burr*

10/8/2022: Participants included Susan Burr, Doug Feller, Kelly Perkins, Jeff Huffman, Nick Schmalenberger, and Lauren Appel.

Note we had to change the date of our grotto weekend to accommodate several cavers.

We originally planned on going to **Norman Cave** since we figured the water levels were low. On the way Doug asked if we wanted to pop into **Bone Cave** first. Since none of us other than Doug had been there, we said yes. The plan now was to go to Bone first and because we thought it was a small cave, we figured we would head over to Norman afterwards. Well, the best laid plans change sometimes.

We did manage to find the Bone Cave parking area. When we arrived another group or two were there. Doug kind of confirmed the direction we needed to go to find the entrance with someone in the group. We headed out and basically found the entrance with no problem...so we thought.

We got into the cave, and we were not very far in when it appeared to just end. Both Jeff and Doug were climbing up to check out some of the higher areas for leads. None were found so we thought we possibly had gone into a small insignificant cave. We headed back out and



Lauren watches Doug climbing p to see if that was the way...it was not!



Lauren & Jeff in a cool passage.
One of several bats seen.

started exploring along the quarry wall. We did find another small cave, but determined it was not it, so the search continued. Meanwhile we noticed the other group was heading to the first cave entrance we went in. We headed back up and found out we were at the Bone Cave entrance originally. We followed them into the cave and discovered in the area we turned around at, we never really got down low, which had tight belly crawl to continue.

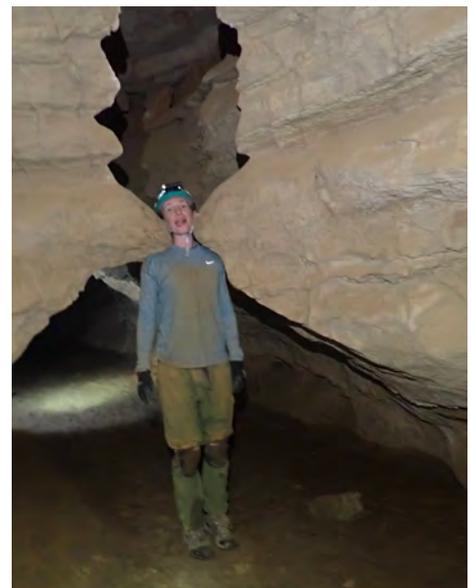
We occasionally got to an area with a tight belly crawl, and we weren't sure if we should continue or not. We basically wanted to go to see the connection between Bone and Norman Cave. Luckily, the other group caught up with us and let us know we needed to continue and where to look for the turn off to go to the connection passage.

At one of the tight belly crawls, which we thought was to the connection, it appeared to be really long. Since I have had back issues, I decided I shouldn't go. Nick, I believe, was also tired or over the belly crawling, so we decided to hang out until the rest of the group returned. While we were waiting, the other group came and told us that was not the passage to the connection, it just continued into the cave. Because of this info, Nick and I continued. Nick and I eventually got to a section where a single caver/spelunker was sitting. He was waiting for his group to come out of the passage to the connection. This is where Nick and I decided to sit and wait. Eventually the other guy's group came out and they were definitely not properly attired cavers.

Since the walking passage seemed to continue, I decided I wanted to go ahead and check out the rest of the cave while we were waiting. Nick decided he would come as well. We left our cave packs at that intersection in case the group came out before we returned. I figured they would realize we were close by. The back of the cave was not too much further. We checked out the back room and then, on the way back to the junction, we decided to climb up a rope we saw. This took us to an upper section we explored. Afterwards we headed back to meet the group.

Once we reunited with our group, it was decided we needed to head out since we were going to go to **Norman Cave** next. It didn't take long to determine we would not have enough time to go to Norman's, so we just took our time getting out and checking out all the areas.

Despite not really having a clue about Bone Cave, other than what Doug could remember from MANY years ago, we did pretty well. I now know that there are LOTS of belly crawls to continue through the cave. Unfortunately, Nick and I did not get to see the connection of the two caves, but the others did. I believe they also went through the connection to see if they could make it. At least now we know we could do a through trip if we wanted to in the future! 🐉



Kelly in the passage being silly on the way out

Grotto Trip Log

10/1 – 10/8: Fort Stanton Cave, NM. On 10/1 the participants included David Socky, Garrett Jorgensen, Karla Zajac, Minori Yoshida, Michael Moffit, and Ron Lipinski. We went to the Lincoln Caverns section of Fort Stanton where Garrett handled a \$40K *GeoSlam lidar unit* to obtain a detailed mapping of this section of the cave. I took lots of videos with the help of Karla. We also helped Michael Moffit and Ron Lipinski do photogrammetry – a method of obtaining 3-D imagery of the cave.

On 10/2 the participants included David Socky, Ron Lipinski, Pete Lindsley, and Alex Fischer. The first part of the day was with Ron, Alex, and I where we did a precision vertical survey from the top of 12 Steps into Crystal Crawl. We used a long plastic tube to measure vertical difference between stations to the precision of millimeters. The second half of the day Alex, Pete, and I went to the ladders before the dig shaft to repair the lower ladder. Then, while Pete worked on rusty bolts in the dig shaft, Alex and I went down to Snowy River at Turtle Junction. We confirmed that the was water flowing in Snowy River. Alex and I also checked out the Don Sawyer Memorial Passage just before the Dig Shaft.

Then on 10/4 & 10/7 the participants included David Socky, John Lyles, and Linda Star. On the surface was Blaze Cunningham, Seve Peerman, and Wayne Walker. John Lyles tested a high frequency radio system which sends text messages using cell phones. The first day we had to abort halfway through the test because of a thunder storm. The radio system worked with

an overburden of about 200 feet, but at spot where it was greater the 300 feet, the radio signal did not make it through.

Then on 10/8 the participants included David Socky, Jennine Smith, Scott Christenson and Jake Collison. We helped Scott Christenson and Jake Collison check batteries and data for evaporation stations at Inscription Hall and at Turtle Junction – the intersection to Snowy River. Jake was the main guy who devised and constructed the evaporation stations. Scott is the geologist who is helping with the studies.

10/6: Cactus Cave, NM. Participants included John Moses, Sam Bono, and Dave Socky. Went to Cactus Cave to retrieve tools at the dig. Only saw about 40 feet of cave, including the dig face. One of the other abandoned digs went a bit further, but apparently it was real gnarly.

10/19: McClungs Cave, WV. Participants included David Socky, Joe Zokaites, Bob Alderson, and Bill Koerschner. We did the bolt climb near the start of Musser's Mess. It didn't go. Then Bob did the traverse using nails at the start of Bat Bone Crawl. It didn't go either. Bob slipped trying to change feet on a nail, but Joe as belayer, caught him. He was also attached to another nail plus his etrier caught another nail, so he only slipped a foot or so. But it was still an adrenaline rush for Bob. We surveyed 123 feet of new cave on the 7.5-hour trip.

10/22: Wishing Well Cave, VA. Participants included David Socky, Bill Koerschner, Shawn Hogbin, Neil DeJarnette, Mike Lacey, Eric Collins, and Tyler Wieckert. I led this trip into Wishing Well Cave for Fall VAR 2022. I had Bill and Shawn to help because they

wanted to go on this trip. Tyler was a young kid who had never been on a wild cave trip before. He did great and really enjoyed himself. Eric Collins was a British caver who had never caved in the US before. Neil hadn't caved for 15 years and admitted to not being in shape for the crawls. We made it back to Echo Junction and only made two wrong turns on the way out. There was a lot more crawling than I remembered. Even in Sugar Run - half of that was crawling. However, there were two really cool and really long lift tubes in Sugar run. We made it back to VAR in time for dinner after a fun 7-hour trip.

10/26: McClungs Cave, WV. Participants included David Socky, Joe Zokaites, and Bill Koerschner. We cleaned up leads at the turn off from Megalithia for Outer Mongolia. Our original goal was Outer Mongolia, but never made it there because it took a lot longer to do mop up. We did get 35 stations, mostly pretty short shots, resulting in only 336 feet of survey on an 11-hour trip.

10/29: McClungs Cave, WV. Participants included David Socky and Joe Zokaites with a second team of Nikki Fox, Carl Amundson, and Paul Walko. We went into Lightner entrance and surveyed in the Third Breakdown. Joe and I did mostly crawling side passages except for the connection back up to the WFD survey. Nikki and team did the main way on. There was lots of crawling. Third Breakdown is not huge height-wise. Some of the stuff Nikki did was really wide, but low. Overall, it was a good trip. We surveyed a total of 1090 feet on a long 13.5-hour trip. 🐾



For more details visit [ROANOKE VALLEY MINERAL & GEM SOCIETY](#) on Facebook.

32nd Annual Roanoke Valley Mineral & Gem Show

Location: Salem Civic Center
1001 Roanoke Boulevard, Salem, VA 24153

Admission: \$5.00 for adults, under 14 free with a paying Adult. Tickets are sold at the door, and are good for all 3 days

Show Dates: November 25th, 26th, 27th, 2022

Friday 25th	2pm to 7pm
Saturday 26th	10am to 6pm
Sunday 27th	12pm to 5pm



New River Cave Preserve

Hello VAR members,

Let me introduce myself if you haven't met me, my name is Travis Coad. I have been caving in the New River Valley for the last 20+ years, I am member of VPI Cave Club, a founding member of the Blacksburg Cave Rescue Group, and also the Outdoor Supervisor for Town of Blacksburg Parks & Recreation.

I want to reach out to the VAR membership and as you may or may not know that in 2021, I was appointed the New River Cave Preserve manager for the NSS. I would appreciate an email to newriverpreserve@caves.org if you or your organization plans to visit New River Cave. Please include your organization name, date of visit, and number of people in your group so I and the NSS can keep some statistics on visitation to the cave. Also remember to sign the registers at the Kiosk and in the cave. (Friendly reminder and please spread the word the register at the Kiosk is NOT a sign out and should not be treated as such.)

I am also asking you and your organization to be additional eyes and ears on the preserve property. Please feel free to contact me at newriverpreserve@caves.org with any updates, issues, or interesting things going on at the preserve and I will look into them.

Things to keep in mind for your visit.

- Oct 15 through April 15 is when the bats are hibernating in the cave. Cavers should move quietly and quickly through the front of the cave to when you break into the main cave, a couple hundred feet past the register room. Take care not to touch or linger near bats. The area where little browns roost in planetarium/attic should be avoided during this time. The bats appreciate it.

If there is anything (within reason) that you think would make the preserve better for everyone please send me an email and I will see if it fits within the scope of preserve management plan.

Additionally, I would love it if you would be involved with the management of the NRC preserve. After all this is everyone's cave. Tasks could include but are not limited to site visits, trail maintenance, scheduling and organization of workdays, fundraising, grant writing, conservation trips, data collection, and more. If any of your membership would be interested, please email newriverpreserve@caves.org.

I want to send a big thank you to the following people who have contributed their time a dedication to helping with the maintenance of the preserve.

- A humble and saddened Thank You to Ray Sira - who tirelessly and selflessly

kept the river property mowed and maintained for any caver who wanted to camp or just hang out by the river. Ray, we will miss you and all your contributions to the greater caving community. Thank you for showing us all the Caver way.

- Carol & Joe Zokaites - for all the hard work on the kiosk and its continued maintenance
- Walt Pirie - for helping to fund some of the maintenance out at the preserve
- E Meyer - for organizing the removal and management of invasive species out at the preserve
- To the previous preserve managers - Thank you for volunteering your time to make all the things happen.

And to all of those of you who have dedicated your time to come help with projects on the preserve. I am sorry I don't have your names but will in the future.

Thank you for your time. And if you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

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Please consider donating to the New River Preserve to help us keep it open. Add "Reserve for New River Cave" in the Comment box.

<https://members.caves.org/donations/donate.asp?id=16956>

Travis Coad NSS# 49552, VPI# 388
New River Cave Preserve Manager
newriverpreserve@caves.org



Breathing Cave, Bath County, VA VSS Monograph #1

Edited by Robert Zimmerman.
Cartography by Robert Zimmerman
and Bob Alderson

Want to know everything about Breathing Cave - its history, geology, photos, access policy, and maps? This is the book for you! \$25.00 each, plus shipping & handling.

Contact Dave Socky sockydr@cox.net for your copy!



2023 NSS CONVENTION

JUNE 26-30, 2023 | ELKINS, WEST VIRGINIA



See <https://nss2023.caves.org/> for info on lodging, restaurants, and above ground activities.

