

# Northeastern Cave Conservancy News

Volume 3, Number 1, February 2001

## Next Meeting

Howe Caverns Restaurant

Howe Cave, NY

Saturday, March 24<sup>th</sup> 10:00am

Snack bar will be open for lunch.

## At the Next Meeting...

- Open forum with members will be first on the agenda so the Board can hear what's on the members' minds.
- Discussion of the proposed purchase of Selleck's, Cave 575, Natural Bridge, and Levy's Caves in Schoharie County.
- Introduction of the NCC's ability to take credit cards for donations, pledges, memberships.
- Updates on other acquisition projects -- South Beth, Purgatory in VT, Barracks Zourie, Church-Wagon Wheel, Carlisle Ice Cave.

## A Summary of the December 2, 2000 Board Meeting

*by Christa Hay*

The following are condensed minutes and are in no order of importance, rather chronological from the minutes. The meeting was held at the Five Rivers Environmental Center in Delmar, NY. For the complete set of minutes go to our website .(518) 374-8194 to have a hardcopy mailed to you.

1. The first order of business was the Trustees electing Officers for one-year terms. The Officers serving for 2001 are:

President- B. Addis

Vice President- B. Folsom

Treasurer- J. Levinson

Secretary- C. Hay

Thanks were given to P. Haberland for serving as the first Vice President.

2. President's Report - B. Addis - in newsletter

3. 2001 Approved Budget Report - J. Levinson

4. Acquisitions Committee Report -

S. Bethlehem - Callanan - on hold, Walter Young is contact

Purgatory Pit - quarry owner has contacted NCC. T. Rider is checking Vermont lawyer contact. Forming ad hoc committee for VT and TNC liaison

Ad hoc Barrack Zourie committee will be contacting the owner shortly.

5. Knox Cave Preserve Report - Palmers continue to do surface survey - check Northeastern Caver for information.
6. Onesquethaw Cave Preserve Report - Albany County Land Conservancy wants to transfer ownership of the Onesquethaw property to the NCC and be given a conservation easement.
7. Website Subcommittee Report - Server has changed so there are links that are no longer linked -- These will be re-linked. Requesting documents in html format.
8. Office Committee Report - Checking if the NCC has joined the NSS as an Institutional member. Thank-you notes (receipts for tax purposes) to donors will be sent out by 01/31/01.
9. Land Trust Liaison Committee Report - Joined the Schoharie Land Trust but not the Albany County Land Conservancy yet. Discussion of conservation easements.
10. Two Bylaws changes were passed by a 2/3's vote of all members attending this meeting.

Add under Article IV, BOARD OF DIRECTORS, a new Section 3: Between regularly scheduled meetings of the NCC Board, urgent business may be conducted by a majority vote of the Board by responding to either an electronic or a US Postal Service offering. There shall be no less than two (2) calendar weeks between the initial posting and the deadline for ballots to be received. There shall be an attempt to foster discussion by listing this on the NCC's electronic discussion group at the time of the initial posting. Results of the electronic or postal voting will be made available to the Board as soon as practical after the voting.

Add under Article III: MEMBERSHIP,

Section 3. Expulsion of Members

a. member not exempt from paying dues shall be automatically dropped for failure to pay.

b. By a two-thirds vote the Board of Directors may expel a member for disregard of accepted safety or conservation practice or the rights of a cave owner or for other conduct detrimental to the Organization. A member subject to expulsion is entitled to a private hearing before the Board.

11. Committee of the Whole.

Porter - revisiting Barrack Zourie, Addis to call Dennis Robtoy

Allison - kiosks needed at Knox and Onesquethaw, has also volunteered to do the kiosk

Porter -changing station needed at Clarksville Cave

Cantello - NCC should purchase Carlisle Ice Cave outright, will look into a quick purchase. P. Haberland to do title search.

Hay - Brooks BBQ for fundraiser. Looking for 2 dates next summer -have already contacted Brooks waiting for dates.

Haberland - Publicity Chair is open

12. A Matching Grants Subcommittee of the Fund Raising Committee was established to seek corporate grants given to employees. Aaron Jarvis, Parkersburg, WV, was appointed Chairman, and he is doing volunteer work for the NCC with a matching grant from Allegheny Energy.
13. The Executive Committee was authorized to purchase the Carlisle Ice Cave, Schoharie County, NY for a total cost not to exceed \$3,000. Thom Engel is instructed to prepare a management plan by the Spring 2001 meeting.
14. Thom Engel is to prepare a management plan with a purchase offer(s) for the Ward property containing Selleck's, Natural Bridge, Cave 575, and possibly Levy's Caves. This shall be presented at the Spring 2001 meeting. The Acquisitions Committee will assist in gathering a summary of the associated costs (legal, survey, filing fees, estimated property taxes, etc.).
15. The Office Committee is to investigate competitive credit card acceptance programs with the assistance of the Executive Committee of Officers.
16. Folsom moved to refer to the Bylaws Committee for their recommendations a bylaws change to Article V, Trustees. This change will describe how to fill a trustee vacancy, and it will consider Section 5

## President's Report

- My efforts with the Acquisitions committee have been the most fulfilling, but not completely successful by getting donations. Unfortunately the owners of Carlisle Ice Cave have decided not to sell or donate at this time. They have cleared the opening of the cave and have asked that no one trespass on the property. Selleck's-Levy's properties remain in my mind a worthy project, so I will prepare a motion for the 3/24 meeting for a conditional purchase of this cave, but first the Ward's creditor must be satisfied that our offer is fair market value.
- West Virginia member Aaron Jarvis works for Allegheny Energy, and his employer has an Environmental Stewardship Matching Grants Program. If Aaron can work 2-5 hours per month as a volunteer for us, Allegheny will give us \$250 for the year. Up that to 5 hours/month, and we get \$500 for the year. Although modest, I think it's a great start, and I wonder aloud how many other employers have similar programs that could benefit us.
- Help us find tasks for Aaron, particularly in Pennsylvania. He can represent us as a liaison with PA cave conservancies, and he can also do any photocopying of documents that need on an occasional basis (not the newsletter). Allegheny might ask for an audited financial statement from a CPA, and ours is a very simple one. Anyone know a CPA?
- I have come across a service to enable the NCC to accept credit cards at a reasonable rate. One calculation says it will take \$41 in fees when we take in \$500 per month. At 8.2% fee, it sounds high, but consider that we will have \$459 more dollars that month than without this service. Consequently, I have put an item on the agenda to have the officers work with the Office Committee to check other sources, hammer out the best deal for us and proceed. This one is called Northern Merchant Services from Galway, NY, and we have found others. Think about what the Southeastern Cave Conservancy has done with this scheme, and I think you'll give it a chance.
- I'm suggesting that the NCC in many instances-Executive meetings of the officers, the newsletter, preliminary agenda-set deadlines and meeting dates so that things don't get overlooked. I'm also suggesting that new Executive Committee meets in between our regular meetings, and one topic for the EC will be to assign committees to each officer to oversee and keep on a timetable.
- Having said all of the above, I see a greater urgency to find a chairman for our Fundraising Committee Help me jump start this important committee, find a leader or co-leaders.

## Member Friendly Meetings

The quarterly business meetings for the NCC will become more membership friendly starting with the next meeting in March. The Committee of the Whole and any membership voting will take place towards the beginning of the meeting.

The Committee of the Whole is where the floor is opened up to the membership to voice their opinions and to ask questions. This will allow for members to come and join in and then leave when the main business portion of the meeting begins.

Members may stay for the whole meeting if they like, but we know the business section can become tedious and some people like to actually spend their Saturdays caving!

Members please join us at the next meeting on March 24.

## SCCi Schreiber Estate Auction Spells Success

*by Connie Hillebrand*

PRESS RELEASE -- December 10, 2000

There was certainly a buzz in the air at the Southeastern Cave Conservancy, Inc. booth at this year's TAG Fall Cave-In. As the weekend wore on it found all of us layering on more and more clothing to fight off the chill but that sure didn't hinder the hot and heavy bidding wars that brought an end to this summer's fundraiser, the Richard W. Schreiber Estate Auction. Friends and strangers, fellow grotto members and caving buds bumped into one another as they checked the bid boards to find the current bid on their favorite lots. All bidders had a method to their madness. Some would wait quietly in the corner of the booth innocently browsing the

SCCi maps and displays until they saw themselves outbid on the bid boards and then they would pounce back over asking to update their bid sheet. Others would blatantly hawk their competition prodding to see what they were bidding on and outwardly challenging them on the most popular lots. It was quite a sight to see especially as the last seconds of the auction clock were counted off and folks strategically slammed their final bids into the bid box in adrenaline-filled anticipation of being the winning bidder.

From the introduction of the auction at the 2000 SERA Summer Cave Carnival, the auction drew a total of 97 unique bidders to the excitement. E-mail bids were received from as far away as California and Canada and one bidder drove from Pennsylvania just to attend the close of the auction at the Cave-In. During the course of the auction, I received a total of 490 auction e-mails and sent out 542 responses to questions, comments, bids, payments and shipments.

What started out to be an auction of 143 lots of publications and gear turned into a total of 172 individual lots as on-site bidders were treated to surprise add-on lots which included several original Richard Schreiber photographs and the green helmet owned, worn and autographed by Della McGuffin which she was wearing when she and Richard Schreiber first discovered Fantastic Pit.

The most popular lot was #2018, an un-fired Petzl brand acetylene headlamp with pizeo striker and belt-mounted Fisma brand generator. This lot received a total of 26 individual bids and ended up selling for \$75.00. There were four separate lots that brought winning bids of \$100.00, and overall the highest selling lot was #1029, the 1989 (Sewanee, TN) NSS Convention Guidebook that topped off at \$101.00.

When all was said and done there were a total of 673 valid bids received. Final bid tallying found 63 winning bidders with an average price per lot of \$22.27. I am happy to report that the Richard W. Schreiber Estate Auction raised a total of \$3876.77 for the Acquisitions Fund of the Southeastern Cave Conservancy, Inc.

As pleased as I am to have been the coordinator of such a successful event, it must be recognized that the efforts of several individuals are what made this possible. At the risk of forgetting to acknowledge any key players I would like to thank the following for their kind contributions of time and talents: Kenneth Huffines for initial inventory of lots and catalog work-up, design and development of the auction web site and for serving as webmaster, web site lot photography, transportation and on-site lot distribution; Dave Seng for development of my bid history tracking program and spreadsheets, for giving up your TAG weekend to help me with bid board updates, receipts and on-site lot distribution, and for countless hours of sacrificed computer time so I could work on auction correspondence; Marion O. Smith for lot procurement, transportation, inventory assistance, and historical and biographical support, Richard Blackburn for web support and SCCi page updates, Scott Fee for distribution of press releases, proofreading and processing of all credit card transactions for the auction; Bill DeVan, Shari Lydy, Louis Towles, Dave Bunnell, John Hickman, Jeff Dilcher and Jim Olsen for auction PR distribution; William Shrewsbury for donating all of the printed materials including the auction catalog, cover pages and invitations, and bidding forms, and for supplying on-site materials; Jim Wilbanks for lot procurement, distribution of auction materials at the 2000 NSS Convention, and proofreading; Moore J. Smith for lot procurement; Bill Stringfellow for web site lot photography; Buddy Lane for transportation, supplying on-site materials, and on-site lot distribution; Bill Putnam for on-site lot distribution; Bill Torode and Stephanie Cothron for donation of special materials; and to all of my friends who generously helped in anyway I asked, provided general support and advice, to those that helped me with factual documentation as well as providing many funny stories about their times and adventures with Richard, and to the many of my kind bidders who sent thoughtful cards and notes of encouragement and recognition, who kept the e-mail bidding exciting and the on-site close of the auction a site to behold, I personally thank each and every one of you, but especially: Bill Schreiber, ET Davis, Kathy Mackay, Bill Steele, Larry Matthews, Bob Thrun, Allen Padgett, JV, Chuck Constable, Lesley Colton, John Pearson, Jay Kennedy, Wes and Mary Sprunger, B Stickney, Bernie Szukalski, Marshall Taylor, Holly Bunch, Martha Clark, Ronnie Nixon, Pat Seiser, Tom Clifton, and Michel Gagnon.

During the course of the auction I was told that Richard would find this quite amusing that folks would be so enthusiastic about owning some of his possessions and that the same would bring such high dollar. I was also told, however, how pleased and appreciative he would have been at the benefit to cave conservation that his collection raised. I, too, am thankful for each one of you that bid and donated to the auction whether it was one dollar or four hundred dollars. You are an invaluable asset to the Conservancy and without the continued selfless contributions of members, sustaining donors, corporate sponsors and program supporters; the SCCi would cease to exist.

I found it amazing that even in death, Richard Schreiber's spirit and passion lives on, surrounds us and continues to do good for both the TAG community and the caving family as a whole. The next time you're underground, particularly in one of the caves so dear to Richard, and especially this coming January as we approach the eleven year anniversary of Richard's untimely death, I encourage you to stop and take a breath and feel the same passion, enthusiasm and power of mystery, exploration and discovery that draws us each back time and time again. And just maybe if you do, you'll hear Richard's whisper back, "It goes!"

## **Fund Raiser**

The NCC will be hosting a Brooks Bar-B-Q on October 26, 2001 at the Wal-Mart on Altamont Ave, Rotterdam, NY (near Schenectady). Time will be firmed up closer to the date but it will run sometime between 3:00pm and 7:00pm.

Brooks does all the hard work and we just have to advertise, sell tickets and help pack the dinners. We will need at least 12 volunteers to work and as many members as possible to come and support the NCC by buying some chicken dinners and spreading the word around.

It will also be a time to talk with people and get them interested in caving and preserving caves and karst features. It would be a good idea to have caving equipment and demonstrate their use. The squeezebox is always popular with kids.

If we can get enough members to donate goodies we could also host a bake sale. People always like to have something sweet to go along with their chicken and ribs.

There will be more information on this event as the time gets closer. But please keep October 26 open. This is on a Friday so that means some people would have to take time off from work to help. Brooks Bar-B-Q is so popular that October 26 was the **ONLY** date available for this year.

## **IMAX Caving Film**

The new IMAX caving film "Journey into Amazing Caves" will be showing in Syracuse, NY. Show times are at 3:00, 5:00 and 7:00pm (tentatively scheduled). On March 24<sup>th</sup> several NCC members will be attending the later show after an early dinner at Dinosaurs, one of upstate's best barbecue hotspots. Call Bob Addis for carpooling and sleepover arrangements in the Schoharie -Albany area. Check out the following web sites for movie clips, directions to the theater and restaurant information.

[www.bigmoviezone.com](http://www.bigmoviezone.com)

[www.dinosaurbarbque.com](http://www.dinosaurbarbque.com)

## **Cave Management Plans**

*by Bob Addis*

Thom Engel had a discussion recently about cave management plans, and we soon discovered some poor examples that other cave conservancies are using. Since Thom is a professional in writing management plans, he has volunteered to give a brief presentation at either the March or June Board meeting on the importance of good management plans and what items you should expect to see. I agreed with him that this could be a beneficial workshop for the Board, and I hope that others share my enthusiasm for this information since we are commencing to see more and more of them.

On another note, Ed Lucus has volunteered to assist Thom in writing a cave management plan for the Selleck's, Cave 575, Natural Bridge, and Levy's property. Thom had said that he would like to have help and that others should learn how to write management plans, so I am glad that Ed has stepped forward.