

Northeastern Cave Conservancy News



The Northeastern Cave Conservancy, Inc. (NCC) is a not-for-profit corporation committed to the conservation, study, management, and acquisition of caves and karst areas having significant geological, hydrological, biological, recreational, historical or aesthetic features. To these ends, the NCC combines the resources and expertise of affiliated cave explorers, educators, scientists, landowners, and conservation officials.

Next Board Meeting

Sunday, December 5th 10:00AM at the
Octagon Barn, 588 Middle Road, Knox NY.

Notes from the June Board Meeting

- 1) Nominating chair Mike Martuscello announces that Thom Engel and Al Hicks have been elected to the board, and that nominees Alan Traino and Chris Goodman have tied, but worked it out amongst themselves and that Alan Traino will fill the remaining spot.
- 2) The board thanks departing board members David Lyons and Craig Cantello for their hard work.
- 3) Youngbaer discusses his role in the congressional WNS hearings.
- 4) Warner reported attending the Schoharie Land Trust meeting and discussing continued interest in potential partnerships with the SLT in educational and management areas.
- 5) Kappler reports that VV totals for 2009 includes 3232 miles and 418 hours of work for a total value of \$11,793.00.
- 6) The board moved to research how the NSS handles ties in the board member vote. Two proposed bylaw changes were announced on 9/1/09 as follows:

Bylaw 1: An election tie shall be broken at the meeting following the election by a written ballot of those current officers, continuing trustees and newly elected trustees, excluding any trustee who is involved in the voting tie.

Bylaw2: Article VI (Officers), Section 3.c (Duties of the Secretary), be amended by deleting they hyphen in the first sentence and adding between Line 1 and 2, "The Secretary is also responsible for editing and publishing the Board Manual. The Board Manual will contain all actions approved by the Board which establish policies or procedures. The manual may also contain historical data such as lists of Officers, Trustees, meeting dates, etc. The Secretary may appoint assistants as required.

Notes from the September Board Meeting

- 1) Winter cave closures were discussed by the board. Knox/Crossbones and Ella Armstrong will close on October 1st. The rest of the NCC preserves will remain open this winter.
- 2) Kappler reports volunteer value totals so far for 2009: 602.5 hours of work and 137.5 hours of drive time to/from projects for a total value of \$21,840.

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<p>The Northeastern Cave Conservancy News is published quarterly by the Northeastern Cave Conservancy, Inc. The Northeastern Cave Conservancy promotes the study and preservation of speleologically significant properties in the Northeastern United States. Annual membership is \$15 (Regular), \$5 addtl. (Family), \$10 (student), \$50 (Benefactor), and \$100 (Institutional). All checks made payable and sent to:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Northeastern Cave Conservancy, Inc. P.O. Box 254 Schoharie, N.Y. 12157</p> <p style="text-align: center;">www.necaveconservancy.org</p>		

3) Guest Carl Herzog gave an update on summer bat surveys State wide Aquostic bat survey. Over 80 people participated. 1900 miles driven (not including drive to and from the route). A stark change in bat populations can be seen already. Some entire routes were driven without getting even one little brown bat, previously the most common species to be picked up. The Big Brown bat is the most common bat species now.

Thanks to all the volunteers!

4) Bob Addis announces that the Octogon Barn near the corner of Beebe and Middle Roads in Knox, NY will be the site of the NCC's 30th year barn dance.

5) Kappler presented several motions for the NCC board manual--all are cleanup items for updating the manual. They include:

-Kappler moved that the following committees are created to conduct the business of the NCC: Acquisitions, Bylaws, Finance & Investment, Fundraising, Legal, Nominating, Office Committee, Publications, Science Committee, Special Use Committee, Knox Preserve, Onesquethaw Preserve, Sellecks Preserve, Ella Armstrong Preserve, Bentley Cavern Preserve, Merlins Cave Preserve.

-Kappler moved: a new Section 4 is added to Bylaw X: Standing Committees. Section 4. Removal of a Committee Chairperson or volunteer: Any Committee Chairman, or volunteer who has accepted an assignment, who fails to execute the duties of office or their assignment may be removed by a majority vote at any Board meeting provided that the Committee Chairman or volunteer to be removed is notified of the intention to take such action at least 21 days prior to the vote on removal.

Both passed.

6) The board thanks Joe Armstrong for his work on the Conservation Committee, Joe Levinson for his time working on the board manual and Vince Kappler for his work on the Board Manual.

Bentley's Cave Update

by Chuck Porter, Acquisitions Chair

(Ed. Note - This article written for the September issue)

Progress towards acquiring Bentleys Cavern continues to move right along. This popular horizontal cave near Berlin, NY has been open to cavers for many decades. The long-time owners, Robert and Eleanor Bentley, at the recommendation of their daughter Randi, decided to donate the cave to the NCC to ensure its availability to visitors in the future. We applaud this decision of the Bentley family, who have owned the land since Revolutionary days, but are very saddened to learn of Eleanor's death on August 28. The NCC preserve will include Bentleys and Dry Valley caverns, over 5 acres of land, an easement parking area and access up the hill along old logging roads.

NCC member Mike Bourgeois is a licensed land surveyor and performed the subdivision survey at no cost. We thank him and to his company, Infinigy, which provided equipment and transport. The subdivision was approved by the Town planning board in July and our lawyer has prepared the deed and other documents. After approval from the Bentleys' lawyer we should very soon close on the property.

A number of NCC members have helped with preparations for this preserve, including trail clearing, survey assistance, a biological survey, and preliminary parking area work. About 15 NCC members helped at Bentleys before the June Board meeting held nearby in Berlin. Once we have acquired the preserve, help will be needed for parking area improvements, construction of a kiosk and possible changing area, boundary posting, and a possible perimeter trail.

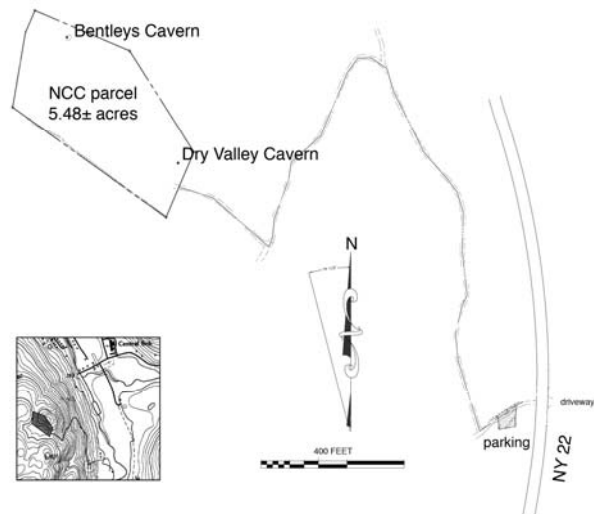
The new parking area is along NY 22, 10.1 miles north of NY 43 and 0.8 miles south of the Stewarts store in Berlin village. As you drive north, look for a light-grey rock outcrop along the west side; the

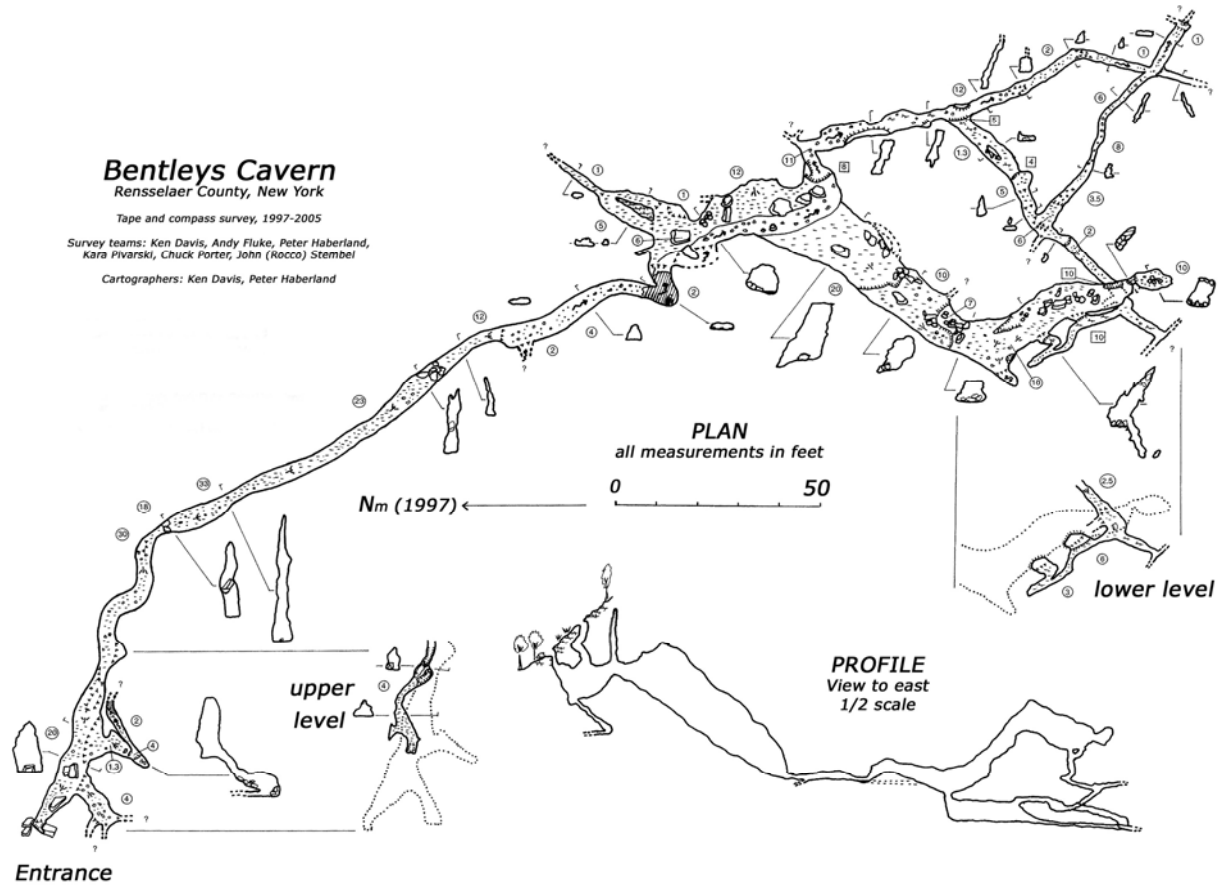
cave is just past that, and across from a driveway leading down by a field to the east. The parking area needs more work and presently requires 4WD under wet conditions. Walk uphill from the parking area, then bear right and follow red flagging along old logging roads to the cave entrances near the top of the hill. The folks in Berlin ask that you leave a note in your car window saying when you expect to be out. Also be sure to take anti-tick measures; they are abundant here.

Update 11/26/09

On November 25th we completed the final legal step and now own Bentleys Cavern. Thanks to Mike Bourgeois providing a free professional land survey the total acquisition cost was only \$1168. Steps ahead include obtaining tax-exempt status, working out a conservation easement with the Rensselaer Land Trust, posting the property boundaries and marking the trail, constructing a perimeter trail, and work on the parking area and kiosk.

Below is a map showing the parcel, parking area, and trail.





NCC Recent Activity
by Bob Addis

Without a doubt, the efforts of many in the NCC have been directed towards fund raising for Merlins Cave purchase and positive results are coming in!

The Fall 2009 NRO was an outstanding success in so many ways – A \$1752 deposit by the Office Committee attests to that!

Merlins Pint Glasses - A hearty thanks goes out to Jonas Spivak, Steve Millett and others who helped. They got a great design, found a manufacturer and then donated the costs to the NCC! About 20 glasses still remain and they're at Speleobooks if you don't have one. Get one!

The Auction had some fine donations, including a pair of snowshoes valued at \$240 from Bob Dion's snowshoe company. Many wonderful historical items from Paul Pulenskey's collection as well as a special lamp used on a Bill Stone

expedition (donated by Brian Pease) were present as well.

The NRO organizers, particularly Mike Telledira, rounded up some great donations for the Sunday Raffle, so the Berkshire Diggers really came through!

- Over 25 raffle items were donated by:
- Dave's Sporting Goods, Pittsfield
 - Action Sports, Pittsfield
 - Graylock Outfitters, Lanesboro
 - Berkshire Outfitters, Adams
 - Barrington Brewery & Restaurant, Great Barrington
 - B & C Wunderwear, Antioch Tenn.
 - Armory Studios, Adams
 - Speleobooks
 - Larry Botto
 - Mike Telledira
 - Arcadian Shop

Big Thanks!

On September 14, the NCC got a grant application for \$3,000 to the National Speleological Foundation for the purchase of Merlins Cave. We'll see how it's treated and how much we get.

The NCC's 30th Anniversary Barn Dance was held on October 17th as a fundraiser towards the purchase of Merlin's Cave. There were 46 paying adults (cavers, landowners, local community) and around 14 children that enjoyed the dancing and fun at the barn. The caller for

the dance was Paul Rosenberg with the group Tamarack. There was a silent auction and raffle tickets for the many donated items. Total fundraising was over \$1700.

Upcoming Events

August 2-6, 2010: 2010 NSS Convention, in Essex Junction, VT.

Pictures from the fall NRO 2009:



Growling Bear Cave waterfall



Alan Traino in Great Radium Springs Cave

NCC Barn Dance:

