

*****For Immediate Release*****
Cow Spring Restoration Project

Jan 11, 2009

This week cave diving history was made not because divers went deeper or further or invented a new kind of dive gear but by making the world a better place. History was made this week when four divers entered the darkness of Cow Springs in Luraville, Florida and performed the world's first underwater cave restoration. Fourteen months ago pristine clay banks were damaged by unknown vandals diving in the system. These clay formations which have been untouched by man for thousands of years feature beautiful multi-colored layers. The project was sponsored by The National Speleological Society – Cave Diving Section.

On January 5, 2009 the team led by Chicago artist Michael Angelo Gagliardi, also featured photographers Gene Page and Jill Heinerth. Wayne Kinard and Bill Bowden rounded out the stellar team. Working in two knot current Michael Angelo used theatrical scenic art as well as theatrical rigging techniques to sculpt the formation back to its original form. The work site was 700 feet into the cave and over 70 feet under water. The team worked for three days in a series of two and a half hour decompression dives to complete the restoration.

Michael Angelo Gagliardi, is a well known Chicago theatrical professional. He is a member of the International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees Chicago Local #2 Stagehands. Michael Angelo has toured the country with such Broadway shows as SHOWBOAT, PETER PAN, THE LION KING and THE COLOR PURPLE. Most recently he was head carpenter of JERSEY BOYS in Chicago. Galleries have shown his art in New York City, Chicago and Los Angeles. He is currently represented by Effe Leven Gallery in Chicago. His art can be seen at www.Michael-Angelo-art.com

Gene Page is a motion picture and television still photographer, with a background in photojournalism, fine art and underwater photography. He also is a member of International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees local 600 cinematographer's guild. His film credits include BASIC, THE PUNISHER and FOOL'S GOLD. Both he and Michael Angelo are alumni of CW Post College of Long Island University. More about Gene at <http://www.afn.org/~afn32018/galleryone.html>

Best known as a pioneering technical diver, Jill Heinerth combines a mastery of underwater technology with a formal fine arts education to produce artistic documentation of the natural environment above, below and inside our planet. Her credits include A WATER'S JOURNEY for PBS, National Geographic – ICE ISLAND, and the Hollywood feature THE CAVE.

Please visit Jill's website at http://www.intotheplanet.com/About_Jill.html

Wayne Kinard was Michael Angelo's assistant and dive buddy. He is a well know dive shop owner in Fort White, Florida. More about Wayne can be found at <http://www.amigosdivecenter.com> Cave diver Bill Bowden acted as surface support and was instrumental to the projects success.

The NSS-CDS is a not-for-profit conservationist organization which promotes safe cave diving and exploration. Cave Diving is a highly-technical form of diving and cave exploration. More about cave diving can be found at <http://nsscds.org> For a copy of this project's report please e-mail Michael Angelo at MA9001@aol.com