

The Laurel Caverns “Deep Depth” Caving Program

9:00 am – 4:00 pm

Saturdays & Sundays through October 29, 2023

Rates

\$60 per person

Scouts, religious, & educational institutions
may phone 724-438-3003 for special arrangements.

Requirements

1. Participants must have reached their 12th birthday.
2. Written parental approval required for all under 18 years of age.
3. All participants must wear firmly fitting hiking boots (they must lace above the ankle) with good tread.
4. All participants must bring two sources of light. Keychain lights & I-phones do not count.
5. All participants must be dressed for caving and abide by the rules in the Caving Program Release Form.
6. Participants are to bring their own lunch and a change of clothes.

Expected Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this program, participants will be able to:

1. provide a light overview of caving first-aid supplies and their use, as suggested by the NCRC
2. explain why teamwork is a critical part of cave exploration
3. demonstrate basic handgrips used to assist fellow cavers during difficult climbs
4. identify the clothing and equipment one should bring on a caving trip
5. describe the environment one encounters when within a large calcareous sandstone cave
6. outline the geological stages that a large cave, like Laurel Caverns, goes through
7. demonstrate the basic crawling techniques one must employ when exploring a small passage
8. identify the proper procedures to be employed should an injury take place
9. explain how new cave passages are often found at Laurel Caverns
10. describe the challenges one faces when bouldering through steep passageways

Agenda

Note: this assumes 20 participants. Smaller groups will require less time.

9:00 am – 9:30 am

Norman Cale Visitors’ Center – Registration and restrooms – assembly in the Don Cale Room

9:30 am – 12:30 pm

The upper half of Laurel Caverns (the lit and unlit sections down to a depth of 20 stories) – The morning phase presents the “Boot Camp” Caving Program, which covers the above ten learning goals.

12:30 pm – 1:30 pm

Norman Cale Visitors’ Center – Lunch break and a decision to return to do the afternoon portion of this program, where the depth of exploration goes beyond the twenty stories down, encountered in the morning session, to a depth of forty-five stories down. A partial refund is available for those who choose not to engage in the program’s afternoon phase.

1:30 pm – 4:00 pm

Participants leave the Don Cale room in the Visitors’ Center for a direct route through the upper half of Laurel Caverns that has them to the ballroom, the first large room in the lower half of Laurel Caverns, within fifteen minutes. They then descend through passages, often 50’ high and 40’ wide to a point, 45 stories down, where the cave’s main stream disappears. They then follow another stream upwards, through Mill Stream Hall, to the Dome, through Roland’s Dig, to the Bat Room, where they follow yet another small stream to return to the ballroom. From there they return back

to the Don Cale Room and conclude the program.