

Murphys, Calaveras Co., Calif.

August 6, 1938

Dear President & Wife

I just rec'd a book from my Niece, of the Carlsbad Caverns of New Mexico, as she is making a tour of U.S. from Frisco. I see that is Governmentally owned, that is too far away for an ordinary perons to visit. I have the best prospect in Calif for a wonderful cave here in Murphys on the road to Calaveras Big Tree Grove,  $\frac{3}{8}$  of a mile from the Mercers Cave a nice one discovered 57 years ago. My Prospect is  $\frac{3}{8}$  mile east of this cave and a much bigger blowout on surface, it is 200 ft East and 600 ft west of present crack  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile long N & S bottom of blowout hole is 106 ft deep from 2 to 18 ft wide the zone is 1000 ft wide to change of formation. I am almost in one months work with 2 of us will open it up But a poor man can't do anything so I write you to see if you or (Govt.) I mean cant take it over and make a wonderful cave of it it is surely located in the most accessable place  $\frac{3}{8}$  of a mile north of Big Tree wood nice road to hill. I have a 5 yr bond on property. I am a hard worker a horseshoer and blacksmith by trade but no more work to do now give me a lift buy this place & open it up or any kind of a Deal you want let me hear from you

Yours best

/s/ Frank Vaneiel  
Murphys,  
Calif.

10 days will be time enough to decide ans please

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By Phone see me *WLB*

Dear Mr. Vaneiel:

It is doubtful that this cave can be considered of national importance. However, in order that the recreational potentialities of the cave may not be overlooked, we are referring the matter to our Regional Office in San Francisco for consideration in connection with the Park, Parkway and Recreational-Area Study now being conducted by this Service throughout the United States.

(SGD) A. E. DEMARAY

cc Region IV (with cc of incoming letter)



Murphys, Calaveras County,  
California.

Mr. A. E. Demaray.

January 1, 1939.

Dear Sir:

I now am ready to demonstrate what I have in regard to a large, underground cave in limestone formation. I have a stretch of country running east and west with lines which demonstrate that I am in perfect line with the Mercus Underground Cave, one-half mile westerly of me, and there is various holes of great depth and peculiar openings east of me, say along the same line clear over to the change of formation of ground on my east. This is too big a proposition for a small man to open up as I have been working on same for nearly four years

I'll just give you an illustration of what I have done and you can judge. The location is on the Calaveras Big Tree road, one-quarter mile north, and a beautiful view of whole valley where town is situated easy access to approach. Is on what is called Rocky Hill, of say 300 ft. elevation above valley floor. There are holes blown into formations for one-quarter mile in length from 2 to 10 or 12 feet wide, and I have went down a number of them and they all trend northward toward Big Mt. and the first one I opened was on a crack running North and South was from 2 to 4 ft. wide, several hundred feet long, and was 105 ft. deep. In the first hole I opened and from 3 to 20 ft. wide and running north on bottom six feet from north rim where the end of crack is situated. I opened up my present workings on a hole 4 ft. wide and pitching north is from 4 to 8 ft. wide and very irregular all the way down to bottom. This crack is same as first one I opened up, only that first one is 106 ft. deep while this one is only 75 feet deep so I think both came from same hole, only one is above the other. I am describing this as nearly right as I can by measurements. The whole line is a few miles long but I have one-half mile in center and very much the largest. The Mercus Cave is in line one-half mile of me, is now in operation and has been for 51 years.

If you care to examine this, come to Murphys inquire of P.M., a lifetime friend of mine, Mr. Mitchler, and he will direct you to me.

Yours very respectfully,

(sgd) Frank Vaniel.

Answer please and tell me when your men will come to view same.





Murphys Calaveras Co 1939.

Chly. ~~Mr. Demaray~~  
Mr. ~~Demaray~~  
Mr. ~~Demaray~~

Mr. W. E. Demaray.

Dear Sir:-

I now am ready to demonstrate what I have in regard to a large underground Cave in Limestone Formation. I have a stretch of Country running East + West with lines which demonstrate that I am in perfect line with the Mercur. Underground Cave  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile west of Me and there is various holes of great depth + peculiar openings east of me say along the same line clear over to the change of formation of ground on my west. This is too big a proposition for a small man to open up as I have been working on same for nearly 4 yrs + 2 men. I'll just give you an illustration of what I have done and you can judge. The location is on the Calaveras Big Tree road  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile North + a beautiful view of whole valley where town is situated, easy access to approach. is on what is called Rocky Hill of say 300 ft elevation above



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UNITED STATES  
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE  
WASHINGTON

*Thompson*

ADDRESS ONLY  
THE DIRECTOR, NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

January 10, 1939.

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*Calif*

Mr. Frank Vanciel,  
Murphys, Calaveras County,  
California.

Dear Mr. Vanciel:

We have received your letter of January 1, concerning a limestone cave which you have opened up in Calaveras County, California.

Under authority prescribed by various acts of Congress, the National Park Service maintains and operates only areas of outstanding national importance for their scenic, scientific, historic or recreational value. In order for an area to qualify for Federal administration it must meet the high standards already established for the national park system. It is doubtful that the limestone cave which you describe meets these high standards; however, in order that the recreational potentialities of the region may not be overlooked, we are referring the matter to our Regional Office, San Francisco, California, for consideration in connection with the Park, Parkway and Recreational-Area Study. This study was authorized by the Act of Congress approved June 23, 1936, and includes a survey of all recreational areas suitable for administration by the various states and counties, as well as areas desirable for inclusion in the national park system.

Sincerely yours,

*(Red) C. L. Wirth*

Conrad L. Wirth,  
Supervisor of Recreation  
and Land Planning.

cc: R-IV, with cc. of  
incoming letter

cc: Mr. Little

WEL-fmd