

## Imprisoned spelunker freed; dies

HAMBURG, Pa. (UPI) — An epileptic spelunker trapped in a narrow crevice of a cave was pulled free Monday and pronounced dead nearly 36 hours after he began the ill-fated expedition.

Rescuers had planned to rush Robert E. Scott of Trappe, Pa., to a hospital immediately upon release because his vital signs were weak.

Cpl. Richard Lester said officials were prepared to fly Scott to Allentown Sacred Heart Hospital Center had Scott survived. Lester said Scott's breathing and heartbeat had showed signs of weakening during the rescue process.

Earlier, authorities described Scott as irritated and uncooperative because of the 55-degree chill in the Dreibelbis Cave, about 10 miles north of Reading, making the rescue difficult.

Scott suffered from epilepsy but was given medicine. He was also given hot coffee and hot dogs.

The amateur spelunker was trapped shortly after midnight Sunday while exploring the limestone cave with five friends. His companions tried to free him for several hours before calling authorities.

State police said Scott was on his hands and knees trying to negotiate a narrow passage when he slipped and became wedged in the V-shaped crevice 70 feet from the mouth of the cave.

Scott's roommate, who was with him when he became stuck, said, "It's very difficult to get through the passage. It involved strange body contortions because it is so narrow. You can't turn your head to look back, that's how narrow it is."

Scott was accessible from the front and back, said a state police trooper at Hamburg. But the trooper said that Scott sometimes slipped back into the crevice, making it difficult for rescuers to free him.

1983 Oct freed spelunker dies

Clipped By:  
usmra\_rob  
Nov 23, 2024