

# Troop 447 Permission Slip – Swallow Falls State Park/ Laurel Caverns

Type: **Overnighter**  
Location: **Campsite: Swallow Falls State Park (MD)**  
**222 Herrington Lane, Oakton, MD 21550**  
**Saturday Activity: Laurel Caverns (PA)**  
**200 Caverns Park Drive, Farmington, PA 15437**  
Activities: **Rappelling and Caving**  
Departure Date & Meeting Time: **Friday, September 15 at 6:30 PM**  
Drop-off & Pick-up Location: **Rockville United Methodist Church**  
Return Date & Approximate Time: **Sunday, September 17 at 12:00 noon**  
Drivers Requirements: **Stayover Adults with Large Cars Urgently Needed**



## ACTIVITIES—PLEASE READ CAREFULLY

Please note there are **both morning –and- afternoon activities**, which have different **age requirements and costs**. Scouts can **choose** an activity for each session-- they should select their activities on the **sign up sheet**.

### Morning Activities (some have costs to the Scouts):

*Rappelling:* \$35 paid for by the scout, must be 12 years of age or older, or

*Geology Merit Badge:* \$18 paid for by the scout, No age restriction but must have at least 6 signed up, or

*Nature Hike:* Free, No age restriction.

### Afternoon (paid for by the troop):

*Lower cave:* Must be 12 years of age or older, or

*Upper cave:* Must be 9 years of age or older, or

*Traditional cave tour:* No age restriction.

**SCOUTS MUST TAKE AND COMPLETE, AND HAVE THEIR PARENTS SIGN, AND BRING TO THE EVENT, THE APPROPRIATE WAIVER FORM FOR CAVING AND RAPPELLING ACTIVITIES AT LAUREL CAVERNS!**

## CAVING CLOTHING AND EQUIPMENT -- PLEASE READ!!

Caving trips at Laurel Caverns **REQUIRE** participants to bring at least **two good sources of light (headlamp recommended)**. Also, each **must wear long pants, a long sleeved shirt, and shoes with good tread and ankle support**. Laurel Caverns will supply the hard hats. The cave **temperature is 52 degrees**. Bring a change of clothing; this is a real caving trip and participants will get the wet sands of the cave on their clothing.

### **SCOUT "A" UNIFORM IS REQUIRED**

Sleeping bag & ground pad

**Long Sleeved Shirt and Long Pants for Caving**

Synthetic T shirt

Light fleece warmth layer

Rain jacket/Shell layer

Red troop hat

Hiking boots

Wool or synthetic socks and lots of extras (and change them!)

Personal First Aid Kit

Day Pack

Towel & toilet articles

Vittle Kit/Mess Kit

Sunscreen

**TWO Flashlights or headlamps & batteries**

Scout knife

Scout Handbook

1 liter water bottle/canteen

**\*\*\*COMPLETE AND SIGN THE BACK OF THIS FORM\*\*\***

## ELECTRONIC DEVICES

No electronic devices of any kind are allowed except cell phones. Cell phones are only to be used in an emergency. At all other times, phones must be turned off and securely stored with the scouts' personal gear. Phones in use or in sight will be confiscated immediately. The Troop takes no responsibility for any loss or damage. The best policy is to leave the phone at home and enjoy the camping trip.

***It is recommended that Scouts NOT bring cell phones while caving or rappelling.***

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## PERMISSION

Scout \_\_\_\_\_ has my/our permission to participate in Troop 447's **September 2017 Overnighter to Swallow Falls State Park (MD) and Laurel Caverns (PA) from Friday, September 15 to Sunday, September 17, 2017.** I attest that the Scout listed above is in good health and physical condition except as noted on the reverse of this slip. I/We give permission to the Scoutmaster, or his representative, to treat the named Scout with necessary emergency care procedures or to take him to a doctor, hospital or medical clinic for medical treatment should such treatment become necessary in the opinion of the Scoutmaster or his representative. In consideration of the benefits to be derived from this activity, I/we expressly waive all claims against Troop 447, Local and National Councils of the BSA, Rockville United Methodist Church, or their representatives arising from any accident, injury, illness or any other damage that may occur in connection with, or incident to, this trip. In case of Emergency notify:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Cell Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship to Scout: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# LAUREL CAVERNS UPPER CAVING RELEASE FORM

Be sure to carefully read each numbered "point to know." Present this form at check in.

**1. Don't confuse this form with the LOWER CAVING RELEASE FORM.**

Laurel Caverns has four zones: (1) the easy and well-lit portions of the traditional guided tour, (2) the maze of unlit but safe crawl passages off the guided tour, (3) the untouched, unlit, huge rooms below the guided tour path, and (4) the mile of untouched, unlit, forty-foot high corridors that go to the bottom of the mountain.

**Lower Caving** involves zones (1), (3), & (4). Participants must be 12 years of age & up.

**Upper Caving** involves zones (1), (2), & (3). Participants must be 9 years of age & up.

This form only applies to programs involving UPPER caving.

**Upper Caving is only involved in our:**

Youth Upper Caving Program    Junior Girl Scout Cave Explorer Badge    Webelos Cave Explorer Pin

**2. Participants must have reached their 9<sup>th</sup> birthday, no exceptions.**

**3. All participants must read and sign this form.**

Laurel Caverns cannot be responsible for lapses in comprehension or an inability to read English.

**4. Upper caving can be dangerous.**

Though upper caving involves the safest parts of Laurel Caverns it still involves going into some of its undeveloped areas. The removal of an injured person can be difficult. In that we cannot research each one of you we must rely on your word that you have sufficient background and physical ability to handle yourself in the cave. Please be aware that participants go into an underground area completely in its natural state and that in many places the footing is slippery, uneven, and treacherous. It is a strenuous trip.

**5. Participants not properly prepared will not be admitted.**

**Proper preparation involves SIX things. (← very important)**

1. Participants must be wearing shoes with good tread and good ankle support.
2. Participants should wear long pants and a long sleeved shirt. Bring a change of clothes.
3. Participants must bring their own lights. Two sources of light which will each last 2 hours are required. Keychain lights are not acceptable sources of light.
4. Knapsacks are subject to search for spray cans, weapons, and the like.
5. Hard hats are required and Laurel Caverns will supply hard hats at no extra charge.
6. This is a real caving trip involving some crawling. Bring a change of clothing!

**6. It is humanly impossible for your Exploring Director to watch every movement and every step of every caving participant.**

It is humanly impossible for the Laurel Caverns staff to know the physical abilities of each participant. Responsibility for such things as the tread of shoes, loose clothing, poor ankle support, medical history, physical ability, medical vulnerabilities, the brightness of lights, the fit of hard hats, discipline failures, the cave floor before each participant, and all other things which fall under the immediate purview of a participant must be, and in all fairness can only be, the responsibility of participants and their sponsors.

**7. Parental signature is required for participants ages 9 through 17.**

Laurel Caverns has no power to research any participant's family situation. A signature by one parent or guardian will be treated as the consent by the other parent or guardian, if any. By signing for a participant, a parent or guardian is representing that the participant is at least 9 years old. If one parent or guardian signs this release and the second parent or guardian objects to the participant's involvement in this activity, or is unaware of the contents of this form, the first parent or guardian must not give approval for the participant.

I (we) affirm that I (we) have carefully read and understand ALL SEVEN of the above paragraphs of this form. I (we) understand that this activity involves risks of injury and I (we) voluntarily accept and assume all such risks. I (we) will not hold Laurel Caverns, its owners, or its agents, responsible for any injuries, accidents or problems arising out of any of the matters described in the seven paragraphs of this form.

Participant: \_\_\_\_\_

Yes, has at least reached 9th birthday

Parent: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Please Print Name:

# LAUREL CAVERNS

## LOWER CAVING RELEASE FORM

(Everything on both pages must be read. A signature is required on page 2.)

*This form is to be presented at check-in.*

**Be sure to carefully read each numbered "point to know."**

**1. Laurel Caverns has 28 programs, only eight of which require release forms.**

- ★ Lower caving (ages 12 & up) ★ BSA Cave Explorer patch (ages 9 & up) ★ Speleology or Cave Studies (ages 9 & up)
- Upper caving (ages 9 & up) ● Rappelling ● JR Cave Explorer badge (ages 9 & up) ● Webelos Cave Explorer Pin

★ This form only applies to the LOWER CAVING program or a program involving lower caving.

**2. Lower Caving has requirements for group rates, registration, and times available.**

Open registration caving is available at 10:00 A.M. and 2:00 P.M. on every day that Laurel Caverns is open. Reservations are not required for the open registration trips. Please visit our website at [www.laurelcaverns.com](http://www.laurelcaverns.com) or call us at 724-438-3003 for further information or group rates.

**3. Our cave has four zones: (1) the easy and well-lit portions of the traditional guided tour, (2) the maze of unlit but safe crawl passages off the guided tour, (3) the untouched, unlit, huge rooms below the guided tour path, and (4) the mile of untouched, unlit, forty-foot high corridors that go to the bottom of the mountain.**

**4. Lower Caving involves zones (1), (3), & (4) and is strenuous.**

Laurel Caverns is the only developed cave in the northeast United States to offer exploring. It is Pennsylvania's largest, with three miles of passages having over 2.5 million cubic feet of volume. Laurel Caverns has a total elevation drop of 464', the deepest in the Commonwealth. Most of the cave is left in a natural state and it is its large, deeper, passages that necessitate this form. Be prepared for steep slopes, slippery mud, streams and hard sharp rocks. None of the lower caving passages is lighted and no conveniences exist in this section of the cave. It is just as it was a thousand years ago. As a rule of thumb, if your health prevents you from the ability to climb the steps of a multi-story building you should not engage in this program.

**5. Participants must have reached their 12<sup>th</sup> birthday, no exceptions.**

**6. All participants must read and sign this form. Laurel Caverns cannot be responsible for illiteracy, lapses in comprehension, or an inability to read English.**

**7. Participants who appear under chemical influence or are resistant to rules as described in paragraph 10 will not be allowed to enter.**

**8. Lower caving is dangerous.**

We cannot make the cave safe for those of you going into its undeveloped areas. To do this would mean complete commercialization and the idea of the exploring trip is to let you see the cave in its natural state. Accidents have occurred involving broken bones and the removal of an injured person is extremely difficult, taking as long as twelve hours. In that we cannot research each one of you we must rely on your word that you have sufficient background and physical ability to handle yourself in the cave. Please be aware that participants go into an underground area completely in its natural state and that in many places the footing is slippery, uneven, and treacherous.

**9. Participants not properly prepared will not be admitted.**

**10. Proper preparation involves SIX things. (← very important)**

- 1. Participants must be wearing shoes that have deep tread and reach above the ankle.
- 2. Participants must wear long pants and a long sleeved shirt.
- 3. Participants must bring their own lights. Two sources of lights which will each last two hours are required. Keychain lights are not acceptable sources of light.
- 4. Knapsacks will be searched. Picnic food, spray cans, weapons, and the like are prohibited.
- 5. Hard hats are required and Laurel Caverns will supply hard hats at no extra charge, for anyone not having his or her own hard hat.
- 6. This is a real caving trip involving some crawling. Bring a change of clothing!

**11. Your Exploring Director has the sole task of showing you the best route through the cave's maze and making sure you do not get lost. He or she can neither provide discipline nor medical advice.**

**12. It is humanly impossible for your Exploring Director to watch every movement and every step of every caving participant.**

It is humanly impossible for the Laurel Caverns staff to know the physical abilities of each participant. Responsibility for such things as the tread of shoes, loose clothing, poor ankle support, medical history, physical ability, medical vulnerabilities, the brightness of lights, the fit of hard hats, discipline failures, the rocks and drops before each participant, and all other things which fall under the immediate purview of a participant must be, and in all fairness can only be, the responsibility of each participant.

**13. Injuries are inevitable in caving and some have occurred in Laurel Caverns involving broken bones.**

Something as simple as a twisted ankle may require a long tortuous removal process involving up to twelve hours of immobilization in a rigid basket, thirty or more rescue personnel, an ambulance ride and hospital stay at the participant's expense, X-rays and observation at the participant's expense, and finally, exposure to unbelievably hyped media attention on your "dramatic cave rescue."

**14. Parental signature is required for participants ages 12 through 17.**

Laurel Caverns has no power to research any participant's family situation. A signature by one parent or guardian will be treated as consent by the other, if one exists. By signing for a participant, a parent or guardian is representing that the participant is at least 12 years old and agrees to indemnify Laurel Caverns, its owners, or its agents, from a tort created by the fact that the participant is a minor at the time this release is signed. IF ONE PARENT or guardian wishes to sign this release and the second parent or guardian objects to the participant's involvement in this activity, or is unaware of the contents of this form, the first parent or guardian must not give approval for the participant.

I (we) affirm that I (we) have carefully read and understand ALL FOURTEEN of the above paragraphs of this form. I (we) understand ALL FOURTEEN of the paragraphs of this form. I (we) understand that this activity involves risks of injury and I (we) voluntarily accept and assume all such risks. I (we) will not hold Laurel Caverns, its owners, or its agents, responsible for any injuries, accidents or problems arising out of any of the matters described in the fourteen paragraphs of this form.

Participant: \_\_\_\_\_  Yes, participant has reached 12th birthday

Parent: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Print names of the above signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

# LAUREL CAVERNS – RAPPELLING

## READ CAREFULLY

### WAIVER AND RELEASE OF LIABILITY

In consideration of Laurel Caverns Conservancy, doing business as Laurel Caverns furnishing services and/or equipment which enable me to participate in rappelling, I agree as follows:

I fully understand and acknowledge that outdoor recreational activities have:

(a) inherent risks, dangers and hazards and such exists in my use of equipment and my participation in rappelling activities; (b) my participation in such activities and/or use of such equipment may result in injury or illness including, but not limited to bodily injury, disease, strains, fractures, partial and/or total paralysis, death or other ailments that could cause serious disability; (c) these risks and dangers may be caused by negligence of the participants, the negligence of others, accidents, breaches of contract, the forces of nature or other causes. Risks and dangers may arise from foreseeable or unforeseeable causes including, but not limited to, instructor decision making, including that an instructor may misjudge terrain, trail, risks of falling, and other such risks, hazards and dangers that are integral to recreational activities and/or use of equipment. I hereby assume all risks and dangers and all responsibility for any losses and/or damages whether caused in whole or in part by the negligence or other conduct of the owners, agents, officers, or employees of Laurel Caverns or by any other person.

I, on behalf of myself, my personal representatives and my heirs hereby voluntarily agree to release, waive, discharge, hold harmless, defend and indemnify Laurel Caverns and their owners, agents, officers and employees from any and all claims, actions or losses for bodily injury, property damage, wrongful death, loss of services or otherwise which may arise out of my use of rappelling equipment or my participation in rappelling activities. I specifically understand that I am releasing, discharging and waiving any claims or actions that I may have presently or in the future for negligent acts or other conduct by the owners, agents, officers or employees of Laurel Caverns.

I have read and understand the above statement of awareness, waiver and release and by signing it, I hereby acknowledge that I assume all risks of this activity, and release and relieve Laurel Caverns, its owners and agents, from liability for personal injuries, property damage or wrongful death resulting from negligence or any other cause. I am of sound health, with sufficient maturity and experience for the rigors of this activity. In consideration of the fee that I have paid, I expect only that Laurel Caverns, its owners and agents, will allow me to rappel in the cave at my own risk. Participants must have reached their 12<sup>th</sup> birthday. Any participant under the age of 18 must have the co-signature of a parent or legal guardian. Any parent or legal guardian who co-signs this form hereby represents that the age of the participant entered below is true and correct.

\_\_\_\_\_  
PARTICIPANT'S NAME

Please Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Age as of last birthday

\_\_\_\_\_  
PARENT (Guardian)

\_\_\_\_\_  
DATE

Please Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_