

Which Cave is Yours?

By Sheila Johnson

Writers and historians have given the world a mysterious view of caves. They would have us believe that some caves are dark and musty. Some are hidden or filled with the unknown. Bears hibernate in them. Lions and tigers and other ferocious animals find a place of escape or a place to spy on their prey. I would read my son's favorite bedtime story to him, *Where the Wild Things Are* by Maurice Sendak. Many of the monsters in the story emerged from caves. He would hang on every word and look at the pictures through the spaces between his fingers that were placed over his face. He always wanted me to read it again, and I would begin, but he'd fall asleep before I finished the second reading.

The mountains of Egypt, Israel, Palestine, Saudi Arabia, and other nearby countries have millions of caves collectively. They are sometimes called tombs. They are very difficult to detect from far away, thus giving home advantage to the inhabitants over any threatening situation. These caves, or tombs, are very sacred places to ancient societies.

There are underwater caves all over the world. The world's largest underwater cave, which has recently been discovered, is located near the city of Tulum on Mexico's Yucatan peninsula. It is breathtakingly beautiful and divers from all over the world take pleasure in discovering new adventures.

And then there are other caves that are not so obvious. The caves where the therapist tells you to go in your mind and fill it with whatever makes you feel good. Then they politely tell you to get out of your cave and join in with the rest of the world. Then there are the caves where Creatives go to get their inspiration for their next project.

Why only "Man Caves"? Don't women need caves too? I guess we forgot to ask Wilma if she really wanted to live in that cave with Fred.

Not all caves are scary, or ancient, or found in water. We create caves every time we feed the negativity in the world; every time we exercise our freedom to isolate; every time we join the voices of the politically incorrect.

Not all caves are good. Not all caves are bad. But we all have them.