

CAVE REPAIRMAN MIKE MANSUR

Article by Debbie Watson



Introducing Mike Mansur, who retired from Intel in 2016. While at Intel, he worked in the CUB (Central Utilities Building) in Rio Rancho, New Mexico as a Facilities Operations Mechanical Technician. You could find him on Shift 4 for 16 years! His job was to maintain the equipment and utilities which supplied the steam, chilled water, OFA (Oil Free Air) and Fire Suppression Systems, and site domestic water to the site. True to his service calling, he volunteered for extras such as ERT, Safety Team Chair, and instructing various safety courses. Not surprisingly, he has several awards to his credit including the 2013 Dave Shea Safety One Award and the 2012 CS FSMTD Safety Person of the Year. Safety is an Intel value that has become integral to all of Mike's endeavors.



West side of Central Utility Building (CUB) with view of gas towers and ultrapure water (UPW) tanks.

Long before Mike had even heard of Intel, he explored his first cave at the age 13 and in 1985 became a lifetime member of the [National Speleological Society](#) (NSS). That passion followed him to Intel where he found time for volunteering and became the Founder and Project Leader of the Cave Formation Repair Project. Now he chairs the National Speleological Society's Southwest Region, as well as the Sandia Grotto, a local nonprofit cavers organization.



Mike began the Cave Formation Repair Project in 2018, and to date, he and other volunteers have repaired 367 broken cave formations over 62 trips to 12 different caves within the USFS, NPS, BLM jurisdictions. He's even repaired Rushmore Cave in SD, which is privately owned. He has had 46 volunteers who have traveled round trip from home a total of 8,1213.8 miles and logged 1,573.5 "cave hours" to volunteer their time for this project.



(L to R) Michael Moffitt, Mike Mansur (center), and Devlin Willingham repairing a broken stalagmite in Slaughter Canyon Cave in Carlsbad Caverns National Park

Mike's efforts are well appreciated: Erin Lynch, a cave specialist for Carlsbad Caverns National Park talked about how he restored a 32-lb. stalactite in Carlsbad Cavern's Big Room. She indicated, "His work has enhanced the natural beauty of an area enjoyed by hundreds of thousands of visitors each year."

Kevin Chase, the cave manager at Rushmore Cave, in Keystone South Dakota,



Rushmore Cave, Key Stone, South Dakota

sings Mike's praises for helping to repair two cave formations in Rushmore. "Mike drove his personal truck 18 hours from New

Mexico to South Dakota bringing all the needed supplies with him. He spent hours with us at Rushmore Cave, not just repairing the formations for us but teaching us every step needed. He showed us how to create all the tools he uses, prepare the formations, make sure they line up properly, and lastly doing the actual repairs.”



Mike also brought his passion to the written word by writing an eBook titled [The Cave Formation Repair Project](#), which is now available online at Speleobooks. He is donating \$5.00 from each sale to the NSS Save The Caves Fund.

While researching this article, I happened across a BLOG that shed even more light upon the man behind Mike Mansur. It turns out, Mike is an award-winning weightlifter <https://celeryellen.com/a-good-life/> as well!

Whatever part of his fascinating past or present piques your interest, feel free to get in touch with him at cav8@protonmail.com.



Mike winning a bronze medal at the 2003 World Masters Championship in Savannah, GA