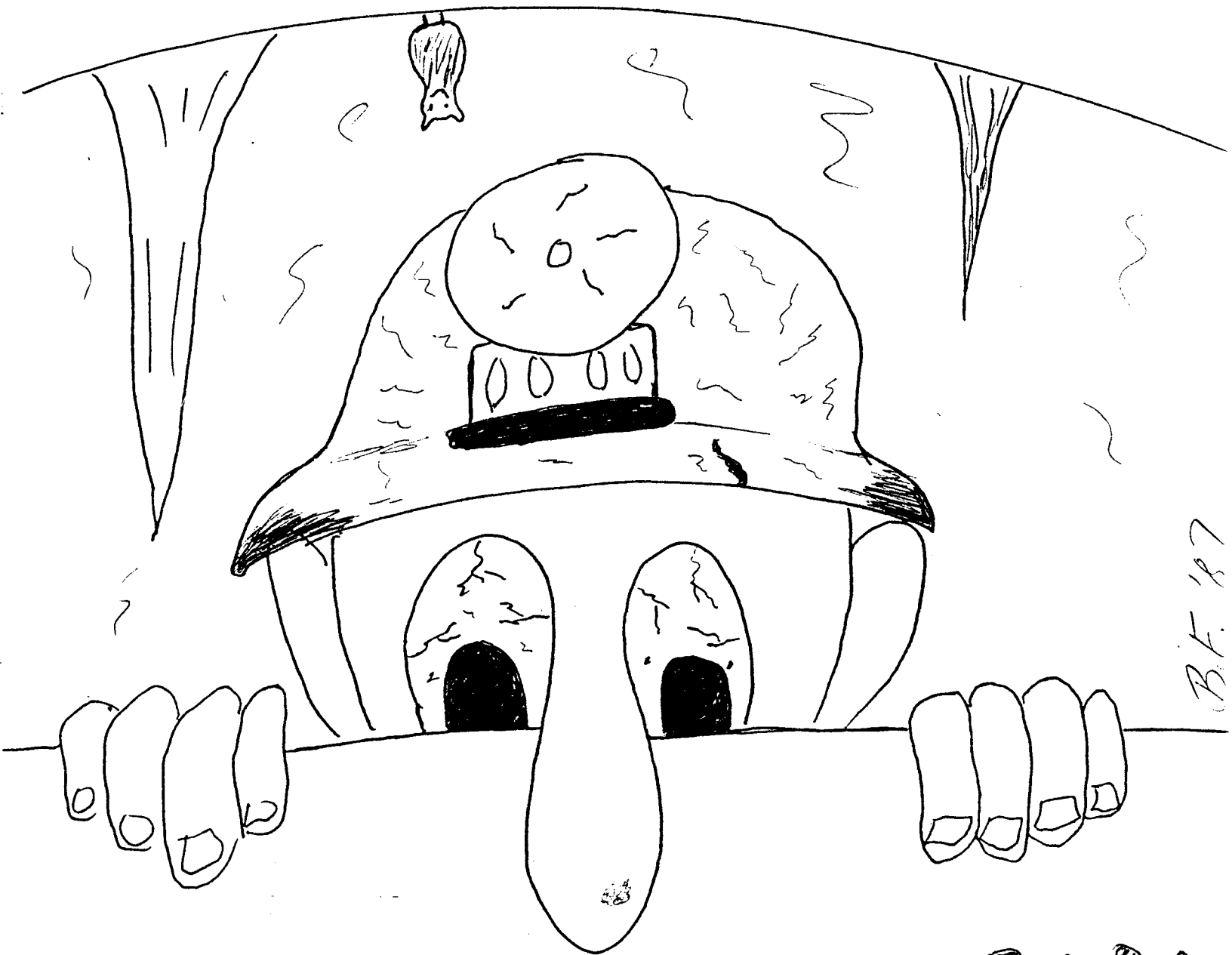


THE MAVERICK BULL

VOLUME 2, NUMBER 9

OCTOBER 1987



B.F. '87

CAVER KILROY

THE MAVERICK BULL, is the monthly newsletter of THE MAVERICK GROTTTO, an internal organization of the National Speleological Society (NSS G-322).

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The Editor invites all cavers to submit articles, news, maps, cartoons, art, and photographs. If the material is to be returned, a self-addressed, stamped envelope should accompany it. News items may be submitted on floppy diskettes in either APPLE II, or IBM compatible ASCII Text file format. Items should be of interest to cavers and their ilk, and be non-political (except cartoons of very good humor) in nature.

Internal organizations of the National Speleological Society may reprint any item (unless copyrights belong to author as will be stated in byline) first appearing in THE MAVERICK BULL, if proper credit is given and a complete copy of the publication is delivered to THE MAVERICK GROTTTO address at the time of publication. Other organizations should contact the grotto at the address herein.

EXCHANGES: THE MAVERICK BULL, will exchange newsletters with other grottos. Contact any officer.

COMPLIMENTARY NEWSLETTERS: THE MAVERICK GROTTTO will provide complimentary newsletters to persons or organizations considered to be Grotto friends. Grotto friends are persons or organizations who provide cave access (i.e. landowners) or otherwise provide assistance to cavers.

COMPLIMENTARY NEWSLETTERS: THE MAVERICK GROTTTO will provide three free issues to interested parties. At the end of this period the persons receiving the newsletter will have subscribed, become a Grotto member (or will be one soon) or complimentary newsletters will be suspended.

SUBSCRIPTION RATES: Subscription Rate is \$10.00, per year for non-members.

PRINTING: This issue was printed FREE by the TROG PRESS, INC. in the Republic of Texas.

MEMBERSHIP POLICY: Any caver with interest, beliefs, and actions, consistent with the purposes of THE MAVERICK GROTTTO and the National

Speleological society is eligible for membership. Membership in the National Speleological Society is encouraged, but not mandatory except to hold office. Acceptance of new members is based on payment of dues and a mandatory three trip requirement with at least three different grotto members. These three members shall act as sponsors and at least one of these members will be required present at a Grotto Meeting where they may be voted in by a two-thirds majority vote of the members present.

Mavericks: 1) American pioneer who did not brand his calves, 2) An unbranded range animal, especially a calf, 3) the University of Texas, Arlington, football team.

MEETINGS: Meetings are held the second Tuesday of each month, at SMOKEY'S RIBS, at 5300 East Lancaster in the east central part of Fort Worth, Texas. Just short of one mile west of Loop 820. This is a central point in Tarrant County, and should be convenient to the mid-cities, Arlington, and Fort Worth! The time is 7:00 P.M., and the food is good. Go through the regular line for your grub and then come to the "party room" which we have reserved in back.

OFFICERS

Chairman:	Corky Corcoran 600 Autumn Lane Plano, Texas, 75075 214-578-1474
Vice-Chairman:	Donna Anderson 504 Kimbrough Fort Worth, Texas, 76108 817-246-6313
Treasurer:	Joe Giddens III P.O. Box 170274 Arlington, Texas, 76003 817-572-4082
Editor/Secretary:	Butch Fralix 6315 Woodmont Court Fort Worth, Texas, 76133 817-346-2039

COVER: This months cover is a surprise, even to me. I haven't yet looked through my vast collection of artwork. It'll probably be a cartoon submitted by either Corky Corcoran or Dale Ellison.

1987 CALENDAR

- Oct. 13; Maverick Grotto Meeting.
- Oct. 16-18; Kickapoo Cave, TSA
Project, Uvalde Co.,
25 miles west of Rock Springs
on Hiway 377. A brochure
will be available at the
October meeting for
those wishing to attend.
- Oct. 16-18; Fall MVOR, Lake of the
Ozarks Grotto host,
Alberta Zumwalt,
Rte 1, Lohman, Mo. 65063
(314)782-3560
- Nov. 10; Maverick Grotto Meeting.
- Dec. 8; Maverick Grotto Meeting.
- Dec. 19; Annual Grotto Christmas Party
Held at Danny and Jane
Sherrod's home in Joshua, Tx.
More details to come later.

SEPTEMBER MEETING
FORT WORTH

The September meeting of the MAVERICK GROTTTO, was held September 8, 1987, at SMOKEY'S RIBS, in East Fort Worth.

There was no significant business discussed at the meeting. A handout on the location of Texas Old Timer's Reunion was passed out to non-TSA members wishing to attend. A special meeting to be held during TOTR was re-announced to allow members normally unable to attend regular meetings due to Geographic location, to attend.

The meeting was so much fun that the Grotto Logo was neglected in the discussion. It will be available for discussion at the October meeting. A decision is needed on whether to have patches/decals etc., made and what colors will be used on the logo.

The program for the evening was an excellent slide presentation of caving in the Guads, by Ron Miller. Ron, took the slides himself in years past.

Visitors to the meeting were Dee McTeer and Allen Moore who were referred to us from Mountain Sports. Michael Fox, of Sport-A-Ways also attended.

SEPTEMBER MEETING
TEXAS OLD TIMERS REUNION

A special meeting of the MAVERICK GROTTTO, was held September 19, 1987, at the Texas Old Timers Reunion (TOTR), at the Sattler, L & L Campground, Sattler, Tx.

The meeting was attended by Kay and George Crosby of Lake Charles, Louisiana. Kay and George have been on a number of excursions with the Grotto and contributed to the newsletter. They are paid subscribers, who having fulfilled their three trip requirement were eligible for membership. They applied and were accepted unanimously by the membership present (there were more there than usually attend the meetings in Fort Worth).

Quinta Wilkinson of Holliday, Tx. and Fanette Bagley of Nocona, Tx. both attended. Quinta and Fanette are both members of NTSS, as well as charter members of the MAVERICK GROTTTO, but due to busy schedules and long driving distance, have never been able to make a week night meeting although their smiling faces are familiar to all.

Discussion at the meeting:

1. It was decided a party to celebrate the 1st anniversary of the MAVERICK GROTTTO, would be held the weekend of October 3-5. Since inadequate time was allowed to include notice of the party in the newsletter, it was decided that a special flyer providing notification and directions would be sent out. The site chosen was M & W Ranch, near Glan Rose, Tx.

2. It was decided that the annual Christmas Party would be held at Danny and Jane Sherrod's elegant estate in Joshua, Tx. Danny and Jane weren't present to defend themselves but Danny had earlier given consent. The date was selected as to eliminate conflict between the NTSS party which was thought to be on Dec. 12. (A recent exchange newsletter, indicates the NTSS party to indeed be on the 19th, rather than the 12th).

3. It was decided that the Grotto should decide which region/s it wished to be affiliated with. It was discussed that TSA, doesn't have member Grottoes but individual members from the Grottoes. Application for membership must be made with Southern Plains Region, and the question was entered as to whether a Grotto Membership Fee is necessary. Discussion was held of entering the SouthWestern Region. the question was shelved until the October meeting when more information could be available.

OCTOBER MEETING

Once again the Logo Artwork will be available for selection of colors and discussion of whether to make patches, decals, t-shirts or all of the above.

There may possibly be further discussion of seeking Regional affiliation outside of Texas. This should be interesting.

Craig Tebbet, a paid subscriber, has fulfilled a three trip requirement for membership in the Grotto. Craig will be petitioning, if you like his trip report in this issue, drop by and welcome him aboard.

The program for this meeting will be a slide show featuring Montgomery Cave and Fisher's Fissure presented by Craig Tebbet. These are both deep caves requiring vertical entry and exit. This should be a good presentation, come by and see.

EDITORIAL

I came back from TOTR with 15 copies of the River Styx Book to resale to Maverick Members. The books are available at a cost of \$2.00 each. These books are becoming in short supply and could eventually become a collectable. In addition, I have 10 copies of "My Mommy Was A Caver" available at a cost of \$3.00 each for TSA members and \$4.00 ea for non TSA members. "My Mommy" is a hilarious collection of cartoons about a middle age mother who was a caver in college. A must for any caver's book collection.

For those who are not aware; each year there are several NSS auctions around the country where collectable cave items, books are sold. Bill Elliot once did several cave comic books of a rather bawdy variety. When available, these

books sell for \$250-\$500 per copy at the auctions. You never know when you might make a simple investment to supplement your old age retirement.

Again comes the reminder that Election of new officers will come later in the year (probably November). Anyone wishing to become a Grotto officer must be an NSS Regular Member. If you don't like the way the Grotto is working, this is your big chance to do something about it.

This year's officers are willing to step down gracefully if so mandated by the majority. Cries of "get a rope" will not be necessary.

JON EVERAGE

Editors Note: THE MAVERICK GROTTTO, wishes to acknowledge the loss of a Texas Old Time Caver and dear friend with the recent death of Jon Everage. We send our deepest sympathy and support to Janice Everage and family. Janice, submitted the following note and moving verse, to The Maverick Bull.

From Janice Everage:

Jon Everage's family wish to express their sincere appreciation for all the care and support which have been demonstrated by the cavers during this difficult time and to share with you a portion of the memorial which took place as Jon was laid to rest.

JON IS HOME

8/29/87

I am now at home, good friends,
I am happy and I'm free;
The Texas flag is flying --
All is just as it should be.

All my pain and grief are over,
Every restless tossing passed;
I am now at peace forever --
I'm content and home at last.

Did you wonder why it happened --
Look for reasons or a rhyme?
Sometimes there're no simple answers,
Let's just say it was my time.

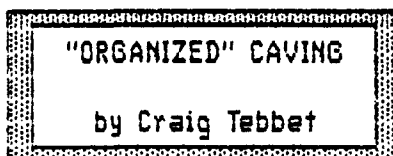
When you all came out to greet me
On my way to where I'll be
Showing all the care you carried,
I was happy to be me.

So you must not grieve unduly,
You still have your lives to fill;
You must look on to tomorrow
To the new and distant hill.

There is life still waiting for you,
And you must not be so sad;
Give comfort to each other --
Knowing in this I'll be glad.

When that life is all completed,
And there's no more space to roam;
Just remember I'll be waiting
To meet you when you're home.

I thank you for your caring --
I was blessed with many friends,
And I hope you stay together
So we can meet here in the end.



DATES: Sept. 15, 1987

DESTINATION: Eagle Creek,
Witches Well,
Manley's Waterhole,
Palo Pinto, Co., Tx.

PERSONNEL: Donna Anderson,
Butch Fralia,
Dee McTeer,
Allen Moore,
Rey & Chris Perkins,
Eric Spears,
Pam Stevens,
Craig Tebbet,
Jarvis Tousek,
Quinta Wilkinson
and Shane the
Wonder Dog.

I receive my wake up call from Donna at 10:40
A.M. as six cavers wait impatiently outside her
house for the silver helmet bizarre late caver,
Craig Tebbet.

In thirty minutes I show up still trying to awaken
myself for the day's adventures. These cavers
didn't look happy but I'm glad they weren't out to
hang me with my own rope for over sleeping.
Thank you Donna for calling me and also for
waiting.

I loaded my gear in Butch's cavemobile and off we
went to Manley's Waterhole cave. Our fearless
leader, Butch Fralia drives (I thought Donna
"organized" this trip - Butch), Donna Anderson
navigates in the front seat and I in the back
write up this lovely trip report. We finally pull
up to Manley's and meet up with our other three
Cavers; Quinta, Pam, and Jarvis, who'd driven to
Manley's from Wichita Falls.

We decided to do Eagle Creek Cave first, but
needed to pick up Eric Spears. Quinta, Pam, and
Jarvis were a little upset because they were
geared up and ready to go caving in Manley's
first. Jarvis even had his Carbide lit. With a
couple of nice words from Butch we were able to
talk our them into going on to Eagle Creek.

Off to Eric's house we adventured, with Donna
still navigating. Somehow we couldn't find the
street Eric lives on. With Butch's cavemobile in
the lead, one motor behind us and two cars behind
the motorcycle pulling up the rear, the convoy
was looking good. As we started doing circles on
the back roads of Mineral Wells, I suggested
stopping at the MCR General neighborhood store to
ask for directions.

Success!!! Butch knew where to go and within two
minutes we were at Eric's house. Everyone was
in the yard talking and relaxing, waiting for Eric
to come out and go caving. But-tttt Eric is
ready to eat lunch and sends ten cavers to
McDonalds to give him time to eat before coming
back to pick him up. Off to McDonalds we go for
our healthy lunch with everyone wondering if we'd
get in a cave today. The time is now pushing
1:30 P.M. in the beautiful city of Mineral Wells.
As Butch talks about his caver dog turning into a
water dog we adventure to, not McDonalds but
the local D.R. Dude. Navigator Donna is a little
on the quiet side now.

With good hamburgers and everybody full, we
adventure back to Eric's to pick him up. Now time
is pushing 2:00 P.M. Butch our driver, jumps out
of the cavemobile to check up on Batteries as
Donna drags Eric out of his house.

Finally! the dice roll changes in our favor, new navigator Eric leads ten cavers to Eagle Creek Cave. With our small convoy we start touring Mineral Wells again. Donna now retired from navigating sits back and takes it easy in the cavemobile.

The tension is high, the cavers all ready and roaring to go caving but they manage to enjoy the ride out Hiway 180 towards and through Palo Pinto. Through the hills up to the rest stop our convoy makes it safely. Ah, a beautiful grass fire, smoke filled woods, and our cavers still gear up for the wild hike to the cave entrance. Group pictures are taken and we're ready to hike.

The walk to the cave was a little work. The cave was short but still pretty neat. Entrance and walking room available, chimneying in some area's and hands and knees work available.

Enough of this cave and out for a pleasurable walk to Witches Well where some cavers were so hot from walking they decided on a late afternoon swim while others watch from atop the cliff. Nice cool water as we jumped into the well and checked out some possible leads but no luck.

We left the water and started our hike back to the roadside park. Back at the picnic area it's time to take a MAVERICK GROTTTO "Bull" break. After filling up on water and Pepsi, (thanks to Donna for the Pepsi) we took off in a cavers flash to Manley's Waterhole Cave.

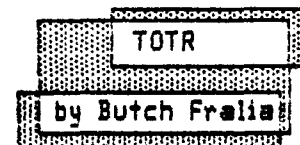
Look out now! There's a car missing, we wait and learn they made a chew stop for Eric and soon a Cola stop for all, but we finally make it to Manley's gate. We geared back up for our treacherous trip through the Water hole cave. Four cavers headed back home before we entered the nice wet cave.

Well the entrance is nice and small. Into the entrance head first with our bellies, hands, knees and chests all in the water. Nice cold water to make everybody wake up for our long crawl and swim through the cave. As we neared the half way point, some carbide problems arose. With a little help from Donna, nearly learning to blow up a Carbide Lamp, we were back underway swimming and crawling. Over the water fall we all went, roaring, grunting and raising a little hell like all cavers do. We finally approached

the back of the passage. Donna in front now trying the incredible push pull slimey crawl didn't succeed for long. Butch laying on his side in the mud on the right bank of the wall, myself shivering like a leaf from laying in the cold water with no where to go, while the rest of the cavers sliding around each other trying to change positions. We all decided to get the hell out of there. Singing nice and merrily we adventured back to the entrance with Shane our cave dog awaiting us beneath all the beautiful stars.

Our adventure trip was about 700' long with our round trip taking 3-1/2 to 4 hours. The trip home sure sounded good after a wonderful day of caving. Thanks for everybody for showing up and experiencing this wonderful "organized" cave trip that the MAVERICK GROTTTO put together.

Butch, I don't think Shane will make a very good water dog, and Pam I'm sorry you didn't get wet but if you'd stuck around you would have had plenty of water to talk about in Manley's water hole. Well good luck on everybody's next trip.



DATES: Sept. 19,20, 1987

DESTINATION: Texas Old Timers,
Sattler L & L Campground
Sattler, Tx.

PERSONNEL: Donna Anderson,
Fanette Begley,
Mike Cagle,
Chuck Cluck,
Corky Corcoran,
George Crosby,
Kay Crosby,
Steve Dalton,
Dale Ellison,
Butch Fralia,
Susan Penney
Ron Miller,
Ryan Taylor,
Pam Wilkinson,
Quinta Wilkinson,
and 300 other
fine Texas Cavers.

Texas Old Timer's Reunion, the Texas caving event of the year finally arrived. After a slow start, Dale Ellison and I arrived at the Sattler L & L Campground, about 1:30 A.M. Saturday morning to find the party in full swing. The Maverick Grotto was well represented and along with members of the North Texas Speleological Society, were living up to the Texas Tradition. After locating the group campsite and pitching tent, we joined right in.

The first event on the agenda was to celebrate the recent wedding of George and Kay Crosby. Donna had even provided a wedding cake for the occasion. It was a large cake and most of the convention managed at least a small sample.

The party continued until about 3:30 A.M., and everyone finally settled into their tents. Due to the limited area, tents were virtually touching each other. After many camping trips with Dale I've learned the wisdom of setting tent as far from him as possible. I've been known to wake myself snoring but when Dale snores, no one is awakened as they can't sleep for the noise. (Maybe Dale needs a new award, he's falling down in the Rain God position. Dennis Thompson, once thought the camp had been visited by a wild boar. After being enlightened, he mentioned he'd never heard anything like that in a lifetime of camping and fifteen years of caving.) In this instance it couldn't be helped that I ended up dead center between his tent and Donna's. As I located my ear plugs (I was prepared), I was amazed to learn that Donna could actually out snore Dale. Big snore's come in small packages.

After a short nap, we awakened to find the party once again in full swing (The San Antonio crowd never quit). Bob Leibman, of Bob and Bob was setting up shop, as was Gil Ediger (T-Shirts) and TSA publications. The Maverick crew got their shopping done early to beat the crowd and began a hard day of play.

Some people were too busy play. There were important meals to be cooked as well as hot tubs and saunas to erect.

The NTSS contingent had a good supply of inner tubes so Quinta Wilkinson and I, spent several fun filled hours of white water inner tubing with detours for biological samples of the local water lillies for Quinta's stock tank.

Lesson#1; when tubing on the Guadalupe, one should not allow their bottom to extend through center of tube. The Guadalupe has many tree trunks and shallow rocks which will cause a tail bone crunching experience.

Lesson#2; when tubing on the Guadalupe, the large rubber floats and canoes from the up-river camps appear to be as large as the Queen Mary as they come toward you. The large rubber floats and canoes from the up-river camps "feel" to be as large as the Queen Mary as they run over you.

Lesson#3; when tubing on the Guadalupe with Quinta, be sure to carry lots of plastic bags for biological samples, a pick and shovel may be handy also.

In the afternoon, the video camera was set up and various events of the Speleolympics were taped. The most exciting event was the sleeping bag undressing/dressing contest. This involved getting in a bag, completely undressing, and then dressing again. The event is timed and the fastest wins. There was a doubles event where two people were placed in the same bag. The infamous Bob Lloyd, was one of the contestants in the singles contest turning in an exceptionally good time. I was advised after taping several bag events that I was on the wrong end of the bag and my tripod was set too high. Oh well, it's a new event, I'll be back next year.

A special meeting of THE MAVERICK GROTTTO, was held. The minutes of this meeting were presented earlier in the newsletter.

Finally came the event every one had been waiting for, the barbecue feed. It takes awhile when you're near the end of a line behind 300 people but it's well worth it. The timing was perfect, the last of the meat was served to the last person in line. There were numerous briskets, goat, pig, ceviche, many types of salad, barbecue ribs and the list goes on and on and on. The trip is worth making just for the feed.

The next event is the award presentation ceremony. The event started with slide presentations to allow everyone time to gather. A presentation was made on the area chosen for the 1988, NSS Convention. Anyone who can go, should, just because of the caves and landscape. A word of warning to new cavers; if

you don't like slide shows, you may not like caving parties. Virtually every caving party, meeting or convention has an obligatory slide presentation. At least they usually include something you're interested in unlike going to the neighbors house where you see fifty slides of their kid standing on his/her head. Caving slides usually include fifty shots of cavers standing on their head.

Bill Mixon (NSS BOG), presented the Texas Caver with several awards for excellence. The obstacle course awards for the Speleolympics were handed out with Fanette receiving her usual award in the over 40 class. The best time of the day, for the obstacle course, was turned in by a man in the over 50 class. One young lady being called for an award, ran from the hot tub clad only in a towel to receive her award.

After the awards ceremony, The Maverick's (and friends) retired to their camping area for a songfest. In a short time, half the convention and some of the finest Speleomusicians in the State were present. The Maverick's soon realized they were outclassed and sat back to enjoy the show.

The orchestra consisted of three guitars (including Donna's backpack special) and two Mandolins. Ronnie Fiesler, who had earlier demonstrated an Australian Instrument called a Ridgery-do (I think), was sought to join in with a touch of the offbeat but couldn't be located. ?--- Strickland, entertained with a song he'd written for his children, it was called "The Biddy Baddy Boogey Man." It had nothing to do with caves but was excellent. Dale Pate (Co-editor of "The Caver") entertained with one of his own pieces. Bill Elliot was spotted hiding in the dark with a tape recorder. Numerous songs were played and finally Jay Jordan sang the song for which he'd won second place in the NSS Song Contest.

When the music had everyone in a super party mood the songfest broke up and everyone headed to their individual groups for their own parties. It was noted that Bob Burney did not sleep the whole weekend. For those who don't know Bob, all I can say is attend any TSA Convention and you'll find him there. He makes Spuds McKenzie look like a wimp.

After another night of little or no sleep, came

the grand finale, the TSA Meeting. The main attraction of course is the election of officers for the upcoming year.

As a warm up for the election:

1. Many complaints were entered about the "Caver" not being on time as well as complaints about various people (who'd paid their dues) not receiving the "Caver" at all. Jay Jordan promised the October "Caver" would actually be delivered in October.

2. Grottoes have not submitted updates to the Cave Rescue call down list since before the '86 TOTR. A plea was made for all Grottoes to notify their local law enforcement agencies of the call down list. (I have several copies and hope to have more before the next meeting).

3. Jay Jordan, reported a source of patches for \$.57 ea. Delivery time is 6 weeks.

4. Mike Walsh plead support for the Texas Cave Management Association (TCMA). Many projects are available and not enough people to do them. You newsletter editor is now a full fledged member of TCMA and will endeavor to keep you abreast of the latest projects.

(Mike is seeking support in administering the Lemon Ranch/Gorman Falls Project. Your newsletter editor may also become involved in this project.)

5. The TSA Kickapoo project to be held later this month will have a one dollar registration fee. Dogs and firearms aren't permitted.

6. A bylaw amendment to the constitution was submitted to separate the jobs of Secretary and Treasurer. The amendment was accepted.

7. George Veni, announced a project to survey many caves in Kendall and Comal Counties. Any one interested can specify wet or dry caves, you need only bring body, caving and survey gear. If anyone is interested, contact an officer and we'll attempt to get more information.

With the business out of the way and everyone in a fiery mood (there were several low level cries of get a rope) the election began.

The first position was the election of a new

chairman. Jack Ralph was nominated to replace Brian Burton. No one else was nominated so Jack was voted in by acclimation. This being an unusual year, Brian stepped down immediately, yielding to Jack. The old chair, took his chair with him causing a slight delay while the new chair, who didn't have a chair, obtained his own chair for the occasion (a loaner from Fanette Begley).

Jack immediately took charge although he didn't exactly follow Robert's Rules of Order which pleased everyone.

Joe Ivey was elected to the Vice-Chairman position to replace Terry Holzinger. Carolyn Biegert fills the new position of TSA Secretary and Johanna Reese who's been doing most of the work anyway replaced Andy Grubbs as Treasurer.

It should be noted that no one ran against the new officers so each assumed their new post by acclimation. The meeting adjourned with everyone happy.

It was a great weekend, one of those you really hate to see end. I'd like to urge everyone to put the TOTR on their calendar for next fall. It's one of the finest/funniest events in the state and provides an opportunity to hobnob with some of the best cavers anywhere. It also affords the opportunity to make acquaintances in other grottoes and gain access to caving trips in other areas.

AGAIN, THE MAGIC OF MISSOURI

by Dale Ellison

DATES: Sept. 4-8, 1987

DESTINATION: Southwestern Missouri

PERSONNEL: Dale Ellison
Arlene Heintz

Friday, September 4th, Arlene and I entered Onondaga State Park outside leasburg, Missouri for a short vacation and caving. We set up a cozy camp then built a roaring fire in the available fire pit. Just about the time flames were dancing four feet high a couple of kids, recruited by a park ranger, approached and cordually invited us to attend the evening's

program on "Bats." We succumbed to their charms and attended.

Onondaga State Park is a clean, meticulously maintained park with various wildlife. Spaces are no closer than sixty feet apart insuring privacy and relaxation. At dusk, bats could be seen fluttering about the tall trees. Later in the night, a Screech Owl called from the tree tops while flying across the camping area. This Missouri State Park is as much impressive as it is enchanting. If your plans call for camping in the area, this Park is a must.

Saturday morning, we walked to a meeting area readied for the lantern tour of Cathedral Cave. Being joined by ten others, the Park Ranger, Eugene Vance, began the tour. (Ranger Vance is a six year vet of Missouri and Arkansas Caves.) He guided our tour as a caver without the commercialism that goes along with commercial tours. I spotted a blind cave Salamander and pointed it out to the tour group and later brought their attention to a bat resting just above the path. Every person on the tour was excited to view this furry, flying mammal which is usually rare on commercial tours. After this tour, Arlene and I plopped down our money for a tour of Onondaga Cave. Onondaga Cave is a commercially lighted cave with a few areas of steep stairways as this cave is large in size not in length. Except for the inexperienced tour guide, the cave itself is full of spectacular grandour.

After a full day of commercial cave touring, we again relaxed at camp with yet another mesmerizing camp fire. Seven P.M., Ranger Vance joined us at camp to give "us cavers" directions to Lonehill Onyx Cave in the Merrimac State Forest. We agreed to attend his program that evening on "Caves" in return for information to the wild cave.

The next morning, our day began later than usual as our tent was located in the shade of tall trees. We began our drive to Lonehill after several welcome cups of strong hot coffee as the mornings were 55 degrees.

Lonehill Onyx Cave is a large resurgence. It is difficult to describe this cave without repeated terms like: large, massive, decorated and impressive. Carbide lights would have been useless except to light the immediate pathway. In

most areas, the beams emitted from our Wheat Lamps, disappeared into blackness. Numerous areas were hands and knees off the side leads which continued out of range of light. We elected not to push these areas because they were too small when thousands of feet of walking passage beckoned our exploration.

We broke for lunch at the base of a massive Stalagmite of milky blue Onyx. It stood regally about fifteen feet tall and about eight feet at it's base. With the light of a single candle in such a large room seated beside this majestic fellow, I wouldn't have traded places with anyone in th world.

As with each visit to Missouri caving with Arlene, my allotted time there comes to an end much too soon. I am impressed with the State's caves and hold dear the memories Arlene and I have have together, exploring them.

Labor day weekend in Missouri 1987 was truly a memorable success even though it didn't rain while "I" was there.



"Ool Grog run into a ... a ... Dang! Now which kind stick up and which kind hang down?"

THE MAVERICK GROTTO
P.O. BOX 170274
ARLINGTON TX. 76003