

THE MAVERICK BULL

THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF
THE MAVERICK GROTTO

VOLUME 3, NUMBER 3

MARCH 1988

THIS IS THIS MONTH'S SURPRISE COVER

THIS IS THE ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP ISSUE

THIS IS THE LAST CHANCE TO GET YOUR
CAVE BALLADS INTO THE GROTTO
SONGBOOK BEFORE IT GOES TO PRINT,
BRING ALL ENTRIES TO DONNA ANDERSON
AT THE MEETING.

ONE OF THESE DAYS, WE'LL GET SOME
GOOD COVER ART AND QUIT HAVING TO
PUT THESE SILLY NOTES ON THE FRONT
COVER.

GOOD CAVING!!!

THE MAVERICK BULL, is the monthly newsletter of THE MAVERICK GROTTTO, an internal organization of the National Speleological Society (NSS 6-322).

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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 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.

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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.

MAVERICK: 1) American pioneer who did not brand his calves, 2) An unbranded range animal, especially a horse, but also applied to cattle, 3) the former University of Texas, Arlington, football team, 4) a member of a caving organization headquartered in Fort Worth, Texas.

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 2301 Streambed Ct. Apartment 1306 Arlington, Texas, 76006
Vice-Chairman:	Donna Anderson 504 Kimbrough Fort Worth, Texas, 76108 817-246-6313
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Editor/Secretary:	Butch Fralia 3412 Walton Ave. Fort Worth, Texas, 76133 817-346-2039

COVER: This is another one of those months. There will be a cover when I get around to figuring out what it will be.

1988 CALENDAR

- Mar. 8; Maverick Grotto Meeting.
- Mar. 11-13; Gorman Falls Work Trip.
- Mar. 25-27; Southern Plains Regional,
To be held at Copper Breaks
State Park, hosted by NTSS.
- Apr. 1-3; S. Western Region/ARA at
ONYX Cave & ?; Contact
Judy Vittetoe,
4738 E. Hawthorne,
Tucson, AZ, 85711
602/795-6991
- Apr. 8-10; Gorman Falls Work Trip.
- Apr. 12; Maverick Grotto Meeting.
- May 10; Maverick Grotto Meeting.
- May 13-15; Gorman Falls Work Trip.
- May 13-15; 2nd Annual Ozark Regional
Caver's Convention sponsored
by Ozark Highlands Grotto at
Webster, Wright and Laclede
Counties in SW Missouri.
Contact Tom Morton,
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- June 6-10; NSS/CRF/NPS Carlsbad
Caverns Restoration
Summer Camp. Contact
Dick Venters,
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- June 10-12; Gorman Falls Work Trip.
- June 27-July 1; NSS Convention,
Hot Springs, South Dakota.
Contact John Sceltens,
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605/745-4366

ADDRESS CHANGE

Please notice that THE MAVERICK GROTTTO, is a grotto on the move and in keeping with that tradition, two of your grotto officers have moved!!

Grotto Chairman, Corky Corcoran, has moved to Arlington but as of yet hasn't gotten a new phone number.

Editor/Secretary, Butch Fralia, has moved again but retains the same phone number. Please direct all exchanges to the new address.

FEBRUARY MEETING

The February meeting of THE MAVERICK GROTTTO, was held at Smokey's Ribs, 5300 E. Lancaster on January 12, 1988.

Donna Anderson, chaired the meeting in place of Corky, who's been promoted and placed on second shift forever. There was discussion of various trips coming up as well as past trips.

Dave Milhollin, quasi-visitor (he comes a lot now) read excerpts from the Cave Accident Report. Hopefully everyone took note of two things, (1) with our membership growing, lots of trips going there's more chance (statistically) of experiencing an accident. (2) most of the accidents suffered were from non cavers. Hopefully our beginning caver trips will emphasize safety to the point it will be programmed in forever.

A questionnaire was passed around asking for suggestions for future programs. There were some interesting suggestions which you'll likely see response to in the near future.

The program for the meeting was a video tape produced by Dale Ellison and Butch Fralia of Fenceline Fissure Cave, in San Saba County.

MARCH MEETING

The March meeting of THE MAVERICK GROTTTO, will be held, March 8, 7:00 P.M., at Smokey's Ribs, 5300 E. Lancaster.

The program for the meeting will be promotional slides of the upcoming NSS Convention, at Hot

Springs, South Dakota. The slides were shown at Texas Old Timers and they sure make you want to get your reservations for the Convention in now.

Editorial

by Butch Fralia

This is the membership issue where as required by our Grotto Constitution, we publish the Grotto membership list. I was comparing the list to last years (which we didn't publish but handed out at the meeting) and it's obviously grown. It will continue to grow, there are a number of people standing in the wings waiting to join when they get enough trips in.

I just paid my '88 dues to the NSS, and I thought it would be a good time to plug the organization a little bit. The NSS or National Speleological Society, is the national organization by which the Grotto is Chartered. The organization keeps track of federal and sometimes state legislation of interest to cavers. The NSS News, is a monthly magazine with articles of interest about caves and cave happenings around the world. The well done magazine, is complete with color cover and inside photographs. In addition there are periodic journals provide articles, papers, etc. usually of scientific interest but often covers the latest in high tech caving, surveying, etc. The NSS, has a complete book service with many hard to find books on caving, vertical and cave history. There are sub-sections within the Society (which have their own separate publications) dedicated to Biology, Cave Diving, Cave Management, Computer Applications, Geology and Geography, History, Social Sciences, Vertical and a special Woman's Section.

Annual Dues for the NSS, are \$25.00 per year per regular member and \$5.00 per family regular member (addition members within the same household).

To apply for membership, send check or money order to:

National Speleological Society
Cave Avenue
Huntsville, Alabama, 35810

You get more publication for the money than any subscription you purchase.

NEWS BRIEFS

by Butch Fralia

RIVER STYX CAVE: During the month of December, several of us took the Wichita Falls, Pathfinders, a youth group from the Seventh Day Adventist Church on a tour of River Styx Cave. I recently received a copy of the Church Newsletter which printed the impressions of the kids. It was impressing to note they were more observant than the adults on their first trip. Some comments:

"I saw a tiger salamander, some crawfish and cave crickets." "I liked the caving club people who led us through the cave." "The things I liked most were: the bats, the high dome ceiling and when we turned out all of our headlamps to experience total darkness." "When are we going to our next cave?" "It's fun to be able to do these things because some people don't have the privilege to experience caving." "I really enjoyed going inside the River Styx Cave. It was beautiful inside." "It's jus a nice place to get away from a busy schedule." "It was truly an experience I will never forget."

GORMAN FALLS WORK TRIP: Twenty six people showed up for the February Gorman Falls work trip. One group from San Antonio, went to complete work they had started before the change of coordinators. They relocated three caves, found another new one and checked out Mouse Hole Cave which pinched off. The remaining group went to pasture number one for a massive ridge walk and located 26 new Karst features, 20 of which are enterable. This was in addition to the 8 known caves in this pasture. There's no doubt in mind that another trip could produce another 26 caves in the same pasture. Pasture number one is 720 acres of karst area. Another 200' of Gorman Creek Fissure was surveyed and it's still going. Texas Parks and Wildlife appears to be happy with us and the next Texas Caver will have pictures as well as the November, December and January trip reports.

There's years of work to do on this park and we've likely established a bench mark for future projects between TSA/TCMA and TPWD.

MVOR: Everytime I think I'm organized, I prove I'm not. Jody Robertson, wrote a great trip report on fall MVOR which I lost when I moved. I appologize to Jody, I'll print it when I find it again.

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LOST IN THE UNDERGROUND, FOREVER?

by George Crosby

EDITOR'S NOTE: this is the SECOND installment of the longest trip report we've ever received, nine pages, typed. This is great!! I haven't had this much material for the newsletter since I've been doing it. Perhaps George will write his caving memoirs and we can milk them out for a few more issues.

CAST OF CHARACTERS: George & Kay Crosby
The Arabie Family:
Austin
Debbie
Randy
Brian

BRIEF: We left off last issue when the group had just reached McKittrick Hill. We rejoin them as they were just settling in to watch a fantastic display of heat lightning.

A show such as this could hardly go unwatched so out came the lawn chairs, refreshments, and the music of Kitaro via the stereo. it was a

hypnotic occurrence; obviously the Harmonic Convergence was happening ahead of schedule and all present were transported to a rapt state of ethereal bliss. As the night wore on the display continued to intensify and build. Distant thunder became at first faintly audible, later distinctly apparent, and at last Earth shaking and ear splitting. The gentle breeze had matured into what must have been a full blown gale that threatened to uproot and carry away everything and everyone. Mother Nature signaled the beginning of act two with the simultaneous release of a blinding flash and a deafening crack as lightning struck right from behind. It was a case of the audience finding themselves rudely thrown on the stage and like dazed and shell shocked soldiers snuck up upon from behind everyone was now frantically and confusedly scrambling about seeking shelter and safety. Being on the top of McKittrick Hill didn't in anyway lend itself to feelings of security and while CB antennas were hastily being lowered Austin was openly wondering what attractive effect his aluminum tent frame might have on the now frightfully close striking of the lightning bolts. The rain then began to fall in earnest.

The next morning was damp, overcast and cloudy with a slight chill. Puddles of water were here and there around the camp site with the biggest one being in Austin's tent. But the weather didn't matter because today was THE day. It didn't take long before everyone had eaten breakfast, sorted out their caving gear, put on their caving clothes and was ready to head underground.

Soon they were standing once again face to face with that most magickal of all natural features: a cave entrance. That strange and mystical time tunnel that serves as a portal between two worlds, one apparent and everyday, the other hidden and sacred. Step over the threshold and you have entered the surrealistic world of cave space and cave time. Nothing of Earth better illustrates the principal that forms are made manifest only by virtue of their opposites.

"Well, lets go" George said as the padlock reluctantly yielded and the gate swung open on creaky hinges. At the group moved forward into darkness the rich earthy somewhat sensual fragrance of the cave atmosphere filled their nostrils. The sense of excitement was high and getting higher every second; remember your first

wild cave trip? Once inside the gate was closed and locked and everyone's equipment was given a final once over. "Remember: take nothing but pictures, leave nothing but footprints, and kill nothing but time." Finally they were caving!

The first objective was to move straight ahead about two hundred feet to the area known as the "Y." About half the distance was walking to stoop walking with the remainder being an easy crawl. At the "Y" the group bore to the right entering a canyon room of ninety feet long, about twenty feet wide and looking every bit twenty feet high. At the bottom of the canyon of the near end was a deep pool. "This is really the only area in the cave system where you might suffer a good fall, but the traverse on the left side is quite easy" George allowed, and soon all of the party had successfully negotiated it and were proceeding along a narrow ledge.

Another twenty-five feet or so and a low passage was encountered that led immediately into the middle maze area. As the name implied this section was characterized by a seemingly infinite variety of ways to proceed, all of which offered crawling or low stoop walking. With map and compass the group made its way across or more accurately, through this labyrinth in a generally westward direction for about one hundred forty feet at which point connection with a south westerly running passage took them one hundred sixty feet later to the south end of the Expressway. From there they proceeded down the five hundred or so feet of length of the Expressway dropping about ninety feet in elevation.

At the bottom of the Expressway, the party made their way into the Gypsum room, past the famous Breast of Venus, around towards the Canyon, and finally into the Green Lake room. It is in these last several areas that one begins to comprehend just how fine a cave Endless really is, and also with bitter disgust just how much more beautiful this cave was ere man first stole his grimy way into these hallowed halls and in less than an eye-blink of geologic time mindlessly bashed out tons of Nature's finest handiwork. Across the ceiling of the Green Lake Room one can now see only the fractured stubble of what was once row after row of stalactites. Looking like some gaping tortured mouth whose teeth all had been broken out at the gum line during some violent act of speleo-rape, these

scenes of destruction and pain beg the anthropomorphic question: do caves have feelings?

God, think of the time, the inconceivable duration of time that Nature, working in dark silence, so patiently fashioned and detailed each creation, and so lovingly caressed each with the tears of her labor. And now what have we to show for Her vast effort? Go see for yourself. Learn well the lesson that this cave offers, remembering with reverence the price so dearly paid.

None of the above is in anyway meant to imply that Endless Cave is no longer worth seeing, quite the contrary. Endless has very much to offer an one of the better known attractions is the War Club Room, scene of the cover photograph for the guide book of the 1986 NSS National convention. And in the War Club Room was where our intrepid cavers next found themselves.

No attempt at descriptions will be made here; others can do that better than I. Only let it be stated that the individual formations to be found here are quite exquisite and the overall feeling and ambiance of the room is subtle yet moving. Be sure to experience this for yourself.

After leaving the War Club room the group took a lunch break and rested while considering which direction to head for the trip out. Endless being the maze cave that it is, there were several options as to how to proceed. The first decision would have to be made just outside the Gypsum Room at the North end of the Expressway. George wanted to travel across the lower level maze that should be about 350 feet to a small opening that should allow access to the so called Mudcrack Room and from there just a short jaunt back to the entrance. The rest of the group was not so sure. The rest and lunch it seems had only made the novice cavers really aware for the first time that they were actually underground and that the entrance and hence daylight was quite ways away both in terms of time and effort. The point that George was trying to stress was that the quickest way out would be the one he was recommending. "But it's only the quickest way out if we can find our way across the lower level maze and none of us has been down there before" Kay said. "True enough" George allowed "but don't forget, there's no

guarantee that we won't get lost going back across the middle level maze either, right?" As there was no further argument, George had won a very tentative victory and the group uneasily acquiesced to the lower level maze trip.

And so it was that a very subtle change in mood crept over the party. It seemed that with everyone realizing how tired they were the neophyte cavers were coming down with "want to get out now" fever. Especially with Brian it was rapidly becoming a case of not only "now" or even "right now" but of "an hour ago wouldn't be too soon." So it was with a sense of uneasy urgency that the cavers left the North end of the Expressway and proceeded into the unknown darkness that was the lower level maze.

After about 250 feet into the maze George noticed that three members of the group were not to be seen. Kay, Debbie, and Brian had decided the safest thing to do was wait at the foot of the Expressway until such time as the opening into the Mudcrack room was found. There was a definite concern on their part about the possibility of becoming lost even though George had told them Endless wasn't a big enough cave to become lost in, at least for long. "Not anymore than a couple of weeks, max." As the moments ticked away the air grew heavy with tension and anxiety until at last the silence was broken by loud distant unprintable irate vocalizations coming from the direction of the Expressway. Kay was demanding in the manner that only a woman can that the group reconsider going back out the way they came in. George, quickly sensing that a cave mutiny was at hand, responded with "OK, OK, No problem, whatever you want. Lets do whatever makes everyone feel most comfortable." There upon everyone resembles at the fool of the Expressway and once again set off for the surface.

An obvious sense of relief settled over the cavers as they made their way back up the Expressway through familiar terrain. Brian seemed encouraged and indeed everyone displayed a new vitality as they climbed their way up the ninety some odd foot gain in altitude. Finally at the South end of the Expressway they stood once at the edge of the middle level maze. Now all they had to do was navigate their way across the maze to the other side and the rest would be straight forward.

The group had gotten somewhat strung out on their way up the Expressway with George reaching the top first. He paused briefly allowing the others to catch up and then struck off into the maze. The basic idea was pretty much to hug the right hand wall of the room for 330 feet or so where the opening to the canyon was supposed to be. Sounds simple, right?

After several minutes of scrambling ahead in the low maze with the others following behind, George heard Austin, who had been consulting his map, yell out that he couldn't figure out where they were. George took out his map and compass and after studying them briefly confessed that he didn't know for sure either just where on the map they now stood. "But it shouldn't matter that we don't know where we are, so long as we continue to follow the wall on our right we'll end up where we want to be" George said. Some how Austin didn't look too reassured and 'bout this time the rest of the group showed up.

"What are you two sitting around looking at your maps for?" Debbie demanded. It was clear from the sound of her voice and the look on her face that she suspected the worst. "We're not lost again are we?"

"Well it's like this" George said, "I've got good news for you and I've got bad news for you."

"I don't want to hear about it. Just get us out of here" She replied.

"Not to worry; everything's under control. Austin just wanted to know 'zactly where we we were on the map and that's what we're trying to figure out."

George then proceeded to try to explain to the rest of the group why it wasn't important whether or not they knew where they were or not.

But that explanation didn't seem to suit anyone's fancy. Not by a long shot.

So there they were: forever lost underground and destined never to see the sun again. What a cruel trick fate had played on these neophyte cavers, these misadventuresome babes in the woods. Where had they gone wrong? How could they have allowed themselves to have been talked into this insane undertaking and why had they not heeded Bruce's council never to enter any cave much less one named Endless? Now there was to

be no future for them, trapped as they were beneath the sands of McKittrick Hill. The flow of time ceased and only the heart-pounding present was left accessible to their racing minds, minds rapidly being sucked into a feedback loop of fear and panic: lost!, lost forever!, no way out!, electric lights failing!, darkness closing in!, all is lost with nothing left to do 'cept screammmmmm!!!!

Sounds pretty bad for our heros, huh? well the above paragraph is a mite bit of an exaggeration and yes they did all make it out and yes is was one great caving trip. Remember your first trip? Everyone wants to go again. At least that's what the talk is. Time will tell. Anyway, may your own caving, dear reader, be Endless!!

GORMAN FALLS, JANUARY 1988

by Danny Sherrod

Editors Notes: This was the weekend after the January ice storm, several intended to go but when they couldn't leave north east Tarrant County before sun down they were iced in. On Saturday morning the temperature had risen to 26 degrees by 8:00 A.M. On Sunday Morning the temperature was 18 degrees by the time anyone would get out of the warm sleeping bags (warm -- assuming you had four of them, were fully clothed including long johns). Sunday was to cold to do anything so after looking over Gorman Falls, we discovered the Kaleche up hill road from the camp was frozen. You couldn't beat this trip for fun.

PERSONNEL: Connie Chaney
 Jeff Duvall
 Butch Fralia
 Keith Heuss
 Jay Jorden
 Bobby Moore
 Jody Robertson
 Danny Sherrod
 Quinta Wilkinson

The January Gorman Falls Work Trip, resulted in several new discoveries and rediscoveries for the proposed state park. First Mouse Hole Cave, was named, which is a new cave suspected to be Circurina Cave, but after spotting several entranced that matched an old map of the cave we determined we have found a new cave as well

as the Circurina. Also, we found and marked a sink that last month's group had found.

Saturday morning we split into two groups. The first group explored a sink that the park ranger told the group about last time. It was a tight hole but opened up on the way down. The group descended until Keith's air meter showed too much bad air. The second group explored and mapped a fissure that went off into a cave. This fissure and cave is over two-hundred (as of February, slightly over 400' - Butch) feet long and around fifty feet deep with a couple of leads. It had a small amount of decoration and we found a large Dinosaurs tooth in the wall and we were ready to call a state archeologist, until we determined it was really chert.

Later in the day both groups united and we ridge walked until dark and made the determination of the new cave and Circurina. Circurina should be a good cave. Jay descended into the cave with vertical gear and said the air was good and said

there was a lot of passage. Time did not allow us to further explore this cave. Hopefully we will do it another trip. The map was not complete so we may have quite a bit of passage to explore and map.

The Gorman area is a great opportunity for cavers. Many old caves have been lost and there appears to be a tremendous amount of new openings to find and explore. Furthermore, this is an incredibly beautiful area. Also, we visited the bottom of the somewhat frozen Gorman Falls that was beautiful beyond belief. This is a great way for cavers to offer a valuable service to the State of Texas. By just giving us access the state will eventually know the location of most of the caverns sink openings, have mapped passages of many caves and possibly some new caves for general use when the park is opened all at no cost to the State (or taxpayers, US! -- Butch) at a time of limited State Budget. Be sure to sign up for a Gorman Trip with Butch.

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