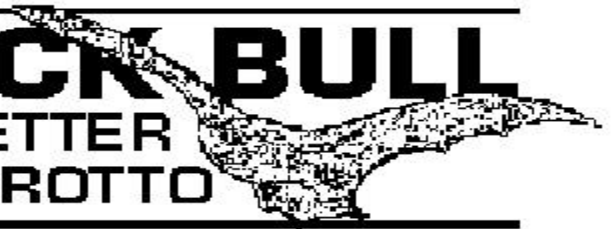


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# THE MAVERICK BULL

THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER  
OF THE MAVERICK GROTTTO

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Volume 10 Issue 11

November, 1996



10th Anniversary Issue!!!!

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**The Maverick Bull** is the monthly newsletter of The Maverick Grotto, an internal organization of The National Speleological Society (NSS G-322). The editor invites all individuals and other grottos to submit articles, news, maps, cartoons, art and photographs. If the material is to be returned, a self-addressed stamped envelope should accompany it.

**Reprinting Articles:** Internal organizations of The National Speleological Society may reprint any item (unless copyrights belong to the author as stated in the byline) first appearing in *The Maverick Bull* if proper credit is given and a complete copy of the publication is delivered to the editor at the time of publication. Other organizations should contact the editor of *The Maverick Bull* at the address herein.

**Exchanges:** The Maverick Grotto will exchange newsletters with other grottos. Contact the editor.

**Complementary Newsletters:** The Maverick Grotto will provide complementary newsletters to persons or organizations that provide cave access (i.e. landowners) or otherwise provide assistance to cavers. The Maverick Grotto will provide one free

issue to persons interested in becoming members.

**Subscription Rates:** Subscription rates are \$15.00 per year for non-members and free for members.

**Membership Policy:** Any individual with interests, beliefs and actions consistent with the purposes of The Maverick Grotto and The National Speleological Society is eligible for membership. 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. At least one sponsor must attend the meeting at which the membership vote is taken. A two-thirds majority vote of the members present will be required for acceptance.

**Meetings:** Meetings are held the second Tuesday of each month at Smokey's Ribs, 5300 E. Lancaster, Fort Worth. It is located less than one mile west of Loop 820 and next to K-Mart. The time is 7:00 p.m., and the food is good.

**Carbide:** Grotto carbide is available at the meeting if prior arrangements are made. Carbide is free for the asking. Contact Russell Hill at 220-7108 or Butch Fralia at 346-2039 for more information.

**Library:** Support your Grotto Library. Russell Hill will be accepting books and magazines on cave-related topics, copies of homemade cave videos, etc. for our library. We wish to thank Russell for his efforts each month to bring and set up the Grotto Library.

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## Photo Credits

This Month's cover photo shows Danny Sherrod in some cave somewhere - back in the beginning! I'm not sure who took it but Dale sent it over!

## Other Credits

Editor: Butch Fralia

Editor-in-charge-of-English: Sharon Mastbrook

## Visit Our Web Site

The *Maverick Bull* is available as a World Wide Web site at: <http://www.why.net/user/caver/bull/>

## Minutes for the October 8 Meeting

The meeting began at approximately 7:00. Mike Anderson brought the business portion to order at approximately 7:30.

**Announcements:**

TCR is in 2 weeks. This is the last year that Gill Ediger will be organizing it. They are looking for volunteers to help organize next year. Dave "Cave" McClung announced that the large tent that the DF/W Grotto has would be put up as a massing point for the DF/W and Maverick cavers to camp at.

The TSA activities newsletter is looking for a new editor. Pat Copeland is no longer able to do it.

Houston Speleospace also had a color cover in October. Chad Fenner brought the grotto exchange copy for everyone to peruse.

**Old Business:**

The 10th anniversary party was a

huge success. Fifty or so people showed up. Tons of great food. Donna Anderson has the banner that was signed by everyone. The slide show screen worked great. There were several nominations for the best side dish.

Mike Swinford should get some kind of award for perserverance. Through the efforts of Mike, Dale Ellison and Dave McClung, the "Chevrolet" hot tub made its debut at the party. At first it was reminiscent of Steve Dalton's first outing with his hot tub, nothing worked. Mike kept working and there was a working hot-tub before the party ended.

**New Business:**

Officer nominations were held. Sharon Mastbrook was nominated for Treasurer, Pam Massey was nominated for Vice Chairman. John

Langevin was nominated for Chairman. Chad Fenner and Russell Hill were renominated for Secretary and Librarian respectively. The nominations were closed and voting will be held at the November meeting, as per grotto by-laws.

A couple of Christmas Party options were suggested, such as Rey Perkins' house or Jay Jordan's place.

**Trip Reports:**

John Langevin, Pam Massey, Ed "is that one or two stalactites" Goff, and a friend of Pam's went to Finton.

Ernie, Dale and Arlene went to CBSP.

Russell Hill is going to South Wales on Dec 28 for 10 days.

The program was supposed to be a showing off of grotto memorabilia, but few people brought anything, so we just had a bull session.

## Editors Ramblings

This is the tenth Anniversery issue of **The Maverick Bull**. As one of the charter members, founders of the Grotto, and the first newsletter editor, I asked to do this newsletter (can you believe that, actually asking to do a newsletter?). I had hoped for a better issue with more pictures and stuff. Things are seldom as good as you would like them but I think this will be a good issue still.

Congratulations Maverick Grotto on your survival. Ten years isn't old in terms of a Grotto but you have survived! In the ten years of the Maverick Grotto, many other grottos were born and died! The Maverick is still alive though over the years there may have been a few shaky moments.

In this issue, we will start at the

beginning, reprinting a fantasy article on the founding of the Grotto. We'll move on and recognize the charter members or remember them as the case may be. We'll discuss the changes in caving during the last ten years. Donna Anderson will share with us some of her memories, then at her request, we'll reprint one of the first articles to appear in the newsletter. We'll reprint Dale Ellison's humorous and perhaps risqué article about ticks and tape.

I'm always amused at the title that Chad Fenner has chosen for this column. It always seems to imply that if your going to edit the newsletter, you should ramble. As everyone knows, I can ramble on for quite some time.

I'll save my rambling for the observations on changes over the years.

Before I close this article; however, I want to once again commend Chad for the wonderful newsletter he puts out each month. He puts a lot of work into it. Better still, he's willing to continue putting his efforts into it. I hope to see more articles from the membership to support his efforts.

Articles submitted don't have to be perfect. That's what editors are for. Give Chad an article and watch yourself transposed into a Tom Clancy or perhaps even Shakespeare!

Good Caving

Butch Fralia

## November 11 Meeting

This month's meeting will be held on Tuesday, June 11 at Smokey's Ribs, 5300 East Lancaster, at 7 p.m. The feature attraction of this meeting

will be the election of officers for 1997. The program for this meeting is unknown at press time. As usual, it should be a good meeting with good

food and good cave talk. Come by and join us.

**IN THE BEGINNING**  
**The Maverick Grotto**  
 by Butch Fralia

**THE CHARTER MEMBERS**

In the beginning there was only DFW, an old Grotto of great renown, and it was in Dallas. Upon a dark night, some who professed to be speleos (children of the underground) gathered high upon a hill in a County called King, on a Ranch called Bateman, near a cave called Styx. Many a liter of fine lager (the nectar of Oztotl) were consumed and spirits ran high! A warm fire lit the night and the hearts of the speleos who gathered there. A voice spoke from the dark saying; "let there be more and let it be in Fort Worth!" That night the thought was not well received but the suggestion took root and later other voices sprang forth saying "let there be more and let it be in Fort Worth!" Thus in the summer of 1986 were the beginnings of The Maverick Grotto.

The early speleos, those called the founders, gathered at a later time to discuss their thoughts. There was Donna Anderson, Corky Corcoran, Dale Ellison, Butch Fralia, Joe Giddens and Danny Sherrod. The ancient speleo, Joe Giddens, wise in the lore of the old time speleos, spoke on that which must be accomplished to become acknowledged by the most illustrious of speleo organizations, The NSS. There must first be a gathering of those of similar mind. A drafting of a constitutional document complementary to the society of caving. A statement of intent on the part of other speleos willing to say "let there be more and let it be in Fort Worth!" These were the words of the ancient speleo, Joe Giddens, wise in the ways of the ancient art.

It came to pass in November of 1986 a gathering of some twenty speleos willing to say; "let there be more and let it be in Fort Worth!" In the minds of most, gathered on that long passed night was remedy to a monthly drive on a work night to the far away county of Dallas. There was willingness to expand the ranks of speleos unable to make the trek to far away county Dallas.

And so it came to pass in those days, the formation of the Grotto

of Mavericks. Those known as Mavericks were numbered twenty and became known as the charters. They chose leadership to guide them through the rocky passages of the early days. These were named as Chairman: Corky Corcoran, Vice-Chairman: Donna Anderson, Treasurer: Joe Giddens, and Secretary-Editor Butch Fralia. This leadership remained mostly in place for the passing of a single year.

Mighty Joe Giddens was called away to a far place called Arkansas and there today remains. Upon the beginning of the second year the coffers of the Grotto called Maverick were managed by Dale Ellison.

In the second year, the finances of Corky Corcoran, the first of Chairmen, heeded the call of night shift. Editor Butch Fralia produced twenty-eight issues of "Bull" then moved on to other demands of life. Donna Anderson served two years in the role of Vice Chairman until she returned to the ranks of Speleos where she is still a strong and respected influence. Speleos Dale Ellison and Danny Sherrod are still among us. Through the years have they held high office and left us with the legacy of their contributions.

During the passing of ten years, the grotto of Maverick has seen many fine cavers enter its chambers. Those such as the one known as Dave "Cave" McClung well known in the hearts of all. Among us has walked the well known David Finrock until called from our midst by prime time television. Many have come and abide still while others have come and gone.

Thus is the story of the Grotto of Maverick in its beginnings. Long may it live in the county Tarrant and forever shall it dwell in the hearts of those who have known its times, its trials and its tribulations.

- Anderson, Donna
- Begley, Fanette & Ryan Taylor
- Corcoran, Corky
- Dalton, Steve
- Ellison, W. Dale
- Fabry, David
- Fralia, Butch
- Giddens, Joe & Georgene
- Heintz, Arlene
- Hill, Russell-Cynthia Van Hooser
- Lytle, Sharon
- Miller, Ronald E.
- Penney, Susan/ Chuck Cluck
- Perkins, Reynold E.
- Porter, Mark
- Poynter, Brooks Edward
- Pruitt, Joe Ben
- Robertson, Jody
- Savage, James
- Sherrod, Danny
- Spears, Eric
- Thompson, Dennis
- Walton, Cleo
- Wilkinson, Quinta, P.
- Williams, Chris-Jackie-John-Jennifer

### The Changes by Butch Fralia

The remaining Charter members of the Maverick Grotto, observed many changes since November, 1986. The people, the technology and politics of caving and the Grotto has changed. You decide for yourself what is better and what is worse.

From the list of Charter Members, you see some who are no longer with us. Where have they gone? Some moved away, some left caving and some like Rey Perkins, left and came back. During the first ten years, new blood has come forth to replace those who left and we have grown. We watched people come into caving to experience the great adventure then move on to other things. We watched people come into caving to find a place for themselves in the caving community and remain today. Those remaining charter members have grown older. We need new people in our midst to carry the torch and keep caving alive. We need new people to broaden our horizons and sharpen our perspective. We need new people to remind us of ourselves when we first became cavers. We need new people to remind us that while caving isn't for everyone, it's not ours alone! People come into caving and leave. Some leave of their own choice and others with our blessings and encouragement. Others come and like us find a home in caving. We need them! Bring them on!

Caving technology has changed. Camping gear, climbing gear, helmets, lights, survey gear, all are constantly changing and getting better. For the most part, caving is still inexpensive and affordable. Every caver with four or five years experience has a museum of equipment they have bought and tried.

Lights have changed. We started with carbide and graduated to Wheat lamps. Along came Petzel with the Mega Light (and others) to provide for our caving pleasure. Small helmet lamps putting out nearly as much light as the Wheat with about 1/10<sup>th</sup> the weight.

Not long ago, a good sleeping bag and tent could only be purchased

through specialty mail order houses. All that could be found locally were huge cabin tents and summer boy scout sleeping bags. Today, all manner of back packing tents and cold weather sleeping bags can be purchased locally.

Today, helmets and climbing gear are available locally. Ten years ago, there were few people who made climbing harnesses. Most climbing rigs were home made and the variety was astounding. Today, a variety of commercial sources provide complete climbing systems. Texas Caver, Joe Ivy will custom tailor a complete climbing system with all the hardware at a reasonable cost. Bob & Bob have commercial chest and seat harnesses of high quality. Local outlet Mountain Sports offers a variety of commercially made harness systems. REI in Dallas offers equipment. There will always be home made rigs but for those of us short of time or skill, the gear is now readily obtainable.

Communication changes via the newsletter and e-mail are astounding. We started with a newsletter produced on a computer that by today's standards was a relic of the dark ages (it's still around if anyone is interested). In the beginning, hand written or typed text was typed into the computer. It was edited, spell checked, then exported into a text file format. It was imported into a program that would do double columns and a variety of fonts. A photograph was taped onto the cover sheet and xeroxed. Today photographs are scanned into the computer to create a digital image and then if necessary, re-enhanced. The software has changed dramatically along with the computers. The first newsletters often required forty hours a month to produce a 'quality' (relative term) product. Today, using Microsoft Publisher, a quality newsletter can be produced in about a fourth the time of that produced in 1986.

The most difficult part of producing a newsletter was in gathering material. Communication was via Ma Bell, hand carry and the US Mail. The Internet was virtually unknown outside

academic circles. Few people had access to a typewriter so articles were mostly hand written. Today, most people have computers and type their submission. Internet access is a common reality. Today our editor, Chad Fenner, transposes the newsletter into a web page that is known throughout the world. Today we communicate via Internet e-mail. We send articles for the newsletter between the Author and the Editor via the Internet. Three articles in this newsletter along with the minutes of the October meeting were transmitted by e-mail!

The politics of caving has changed. Cavers, once a secretive bunch have come out of the closet. Always conservationists and environmentalists, they have used their unique knowledge to try for protective cave legislation in Texas and other places. One effort did result in cavers being included in the landowner liability protection laws of Texas.

The saddest change, is the relationship with landowners. Property sold, and the new owners object to anyone other than immediate family and friends on the property. At River Styx Cave, cavers had a wonderful relation with the owners for many years. With the death of Shorty Mongrain, the estate has been settled and the property divided among new owners who do not want cavers there for liability reasons. Today, liability is a major issue. Regardless of the laws on record, anyone can sue anyone else for anything! Even if the landowner wins the suit he or she has lost because of lost time and the expense of legal representation. Regardless of whether the landowner wins or loses, cavers always lose.

It's been an interesting ten years. What do we have to look forward to in the next ten years? Only the future will tell.

## MEMORIES

by Donna Kay Anderson

As a founder of the Maverick Grotto, I would like to share some of my favorite Maverick caving experiences. My fondest memories of our early years are the numerous trips to River Styx. We loved that cave and each trip revealed something new. "Donna's Crawl" is one of my favorite spots. Dennis Thompson, his very young son Joshua, and I explored the lead. It started as a belly crawl and opened up to a small sitting room, then another crawl to a smaller sitting room. It looked like the end when Dennis moved a few rocks and revealed a really sporting crawl. Dennis took the lead but quickly decided I should go first. A tall person couldn't make it because of the abrupt sharp corners that had you really doubled up. I made it through after about 20 or 30 minutes and it opened to a nice big room nearly the size of the Junction Room except it was oblong in shape. Dennis followed me and made it but I had to move some rocks at the end so he could get through. His tiny son (probably six years old) had trouble even though he had been caving for several years. Dennis talked him through as they went as to how he would have to turn his body to get through. Joshua finally made it. There were several other leads but time did not allow for more exploration. On a subsequent trip I led Cave Dave, and three other cavers to that area. They looked at the opening and said "you've got to be kidding". I let them go first as I knew they probably would not go far. Before they started, I nonchalantly asked them if they had any experience backing up in a belly crawl. They all laughed as they were sure they would not have to retreat. They entered the crawl on their belly through a nice big puddle of cold water getting thoroughly soaked. It wasn't long before their leader got stuck. You should have heard the comments and the "not so nice words" as the leader stated "everyone has to back up." They learned the art of backing up in a belly crawl. Even the

last person in line with a shorter way to back up muttered many expletives. I had warned them it was a "sporting crawl." When they were all out, I led them a short way to a much easier way we had found that bypassed the long strenuous crawl to the big room. It was a short low crawl that led to a narrow fissure where you could stand up and look into the room. I popped through and waited for them. They all tried and tried but all gave up except for Cave Dave. I had a rock hammer with me under the pretense of needing it for exploring the other unchecked leads. My main motive was for rescue work if the need arose. For a couple of hours Dave worked with the rock hammer on his side and then he would pass me the hammer to work from my side. He finally got his head up and could see the large room. His chest was too big to get through the narrow bedrock. The others in our party had departed long before as they were wet and cold from waiting. Dave and I kept warm with all the hammering we were doing. I checked out one of the leads while he was hammering. I told Dave about the unchecked leads we could take if he could only get through. He did say that if he took off all his clothes that he might be able to make it. However, as he was stuck, he decided to wait for another trip with the rock hammer.

A short walk from the River Styx river entrance is another cave called Salt Spring Cave. That was always a fun water cave. A trip with Chuck Cluck was the inspiration for a song I wrote called "Salt Spring Cave" where Chuck was immersed in water with just one eye and his nose above water, his head pressed firmly against the ceiling.

One of the milestones in our grotto history was the publication of the Maverick Grotto songbook. Each of these songs were written by Maverick Grotto members. That year the Maverick Grotto members won all the awards in the NSS cave ballad competition. Many of the songs were

joint efforts by those riding back home together after a caving trip. Ideas would come from what we had experienced that weekend. I remember many trips writing down in shorthand lines that various cavers (some slightly inebriated) would spout out. The camaraderie was wonderful.

Many of you new members may not realize that we have a "Rain God" in our midst. It started when we realized that every cave trip where it rained there was one thing in common -- Dale Ellison's presence. Yes, Dale is our official "Rain God." Recently, we discovered another deity in our midst. The God of flat tires. Think back on all the flat tires your vehicle has had on caving trips. Mike Anderson was sure to have been on those trips.

In September of 1987 we took our first Maverick Grotto sewerlunking trip in the storm drains by North East Mall. We were stopped by the mall security. After explaining our love of caves and dark places, they let us go. We did have to promise to go in there for them if they ever needed us to rescue someone as they did not want to have to go in there by themselves. It was an adventure indeed. There were lots of passages to check out and there were stalactites, soda straws and even rimstone dams adorning the passages. We all took pictures and showed them at a grotto meeting with members trying to guess what cave we were in.

Lots of cavers turned out for a wonderful caving party at Turner Falls in November of 1987. After a good day of caving, we had a wonderful party at the camp site with wine and other hardy beverages. In the wee hours of the morning, the Turner Falls security force descended upon our party with complaints of too much noise, referring to our boisterous caving songs. Songs with lines like "Bat shit, my friend it's blowin' in the wind", were not well received by the non caving campers nearby. We were told to go to bed. Few of us went to bed, deciding to quietly lurk around in

the darkness. Be sure and ask Butch about his run in with the security personnel.

Then there was the M&W party where we had one fatality. Early on Sunday morning we observed Butch lying in his camper, dead to the world. We put wild flowers on his chest and Dale put a toe tag on his big toe. We put many empty liquor bottles beside him. Then we set up lawn chairs facing the open camper as if a huge group had been sitting there watching him. We took a nice photograph of him. Later that morning, we observed flowers and bottles flying from the camper as Butch clearly emerged, wondering what in the world he had been involved in the night before.

There was the memorable trip to Three Mile Hill in the Guads. Six of us hiked out on a beautiful day to Pink Panther and enjoyed a long day of caving. When we emerged from the cave, it was raining and it was foggy -- very foggy. We started out in single file and could barely see the person right in front of us. After about five minutes, we decided there was no way we could see any land marks to find our way back to camp. We decided to return to the cave and wait until morning, hoping the fog would lift. Unfortunately, it took us about twenty minutes to find the entrance again! I got out a trash bag and we collected rain water for our carbide lamps. Once inside the cave, we got out our space blankets and other trash bags and put them over all of us with the carbide lamps under them giving us some warmth. We were wet and cold and spent a sleepless night in the cave, sharing our meager food supply. We had to sleep in a spoon like position all of us together to get warmth from each other. When one person turned over, we all had to turn. We rotated the people on the two ends of the space blankets as they became cold quickly with only one body next to them. The next morning it did clear off and we made our way back to camp. A truly memorable trip it was.

McKittrick Hill in New Mexico was a favorite destination of ours. Countless trips into Endless was always an adventure. On one trip we were privileged to hear the ghost of Endless.

Robert Neymeyer was an early caver who explored Endless Cave for many years. We had just left the Gypsum Room and Mark Porter was piling up rocks over the entrance to the crawlway so he was unable to hear anything. The rest of us, Mike Anderson, Pam Porter, and I were further away from the noise of the rocks and we all heard the same thing. It was a voice saying "Over here." We each heard the same words. We all looked at each other and got real quiet waiting for something else. We did not know of anyone else who was in the cave. We hurriedly got our gear together and ran to the entrance thinking we would run in to someone. We made it out in record time. We didn't find anyone. We ran up to camp and asked Bruce Anderson who besides us was on the hill. Bruce had left the cave earlier and was already cleaned up and waiting for us. He said there were no other people or any vehicles on the hill. On a subsequent trip we went back to the same area. We turned out all our lights and tried to summon the spirit. We lit the white candle I had brought for that purpose. My thought was that a black candle might bring an undesirable spirit but maybe a white candle would bring a good spirit. We all started chanting over and over again, "Neymeyer, Neymeyer, show us more cave." The flame on the candle slowly got lower and lower and nearly went out and then it suddenly flamed up again. However, no voices were heard and our hopes of following the voice and finding more cave slowly vanished. Our encounter with the voice was no isolated instance as there are many tales of unexplained manifestations in that cave.

All of the trips to the Brister Ranch were great. On one occasion, Al Rehfeld decided to navigate back to camp from one of the caves via compass instead of following the fence line. He sheepishly showed up back at camp about an hour after everyone else.

For years we enjoyed the Colorado Bend trips where we made good friends from all over Texas. Gorman Creek Crevice was a favorite of mine. I found out that to lead new cavers

through this cave was sure to end their fascination with caving. Jody Robertson never lived down the "it don't go" passage. He explored a passage and pronounced "it don't go". Later, I found that it opened into mega cave (well, mega belly crawl). We still have not found the end of it. On one of the last trips, Don Denton and I found walking borehole full of bad air. We both took a deep breath and ran down the passage as far as we could to see if it kept going. It did, but we had to turn around and run back out to get another breath of air.

My favorite all time trip report is the one entitled "River Styx: The Never Ending Story" by Butch Fralia first published in the December 1986 newsletter. See the reprint in this newsletter.

Our recent 10th anniversary party that was attended by about 50 cavers from our area. Friday night about 15 cavers arrived early to begin the festivities. The celebration started with lots of margaritas, daiquiris, and pina coladas. Saturday night there were fajitas, chicken, brisket, turkey and a winning side dish entry by Bob Obele. The new regional hot tub, built by Mike Swinford, made its first appearance and is truly the cadillac of hot tubs. Russell Hill brought Champaign to toast the 10th anniversary around midnight. Sunday morning there was a piñata for the kids with the grownups enjoying the show as the kids tackled the piñata.

We have made many close friends since we started the Maverick Grotto and enjoyed many exciting times together. I think all the hard work the officers and members have done over the years was well worth the effort. We've come a long way since our beginnings. We now have a state of the art Maverick Grotto web site by Chad Fenner. John Langevin, is producing winning entries in the NSS photo salon. Our recent color cover taken by John and produced by Chad Fenner, Butch Fralia, and Dale Ellison ensures that our grotto is alive and well and should survive another ten years.

**RIVER STYX: "THE NEVER ENDING STORY"**

by Butch Fralia

**DATES:** August 9-11, 1986**DESTINATION:** River Styx Cave, Bateman Ranch, King County, Texas**PERSONNEL:** Donna Anderson, Corky Corcoran, Butch Fralia, Mark Porter, Danny Sherrod, Chris Williams, Shane the Wonder Dog.

From the Metroplex seven rode, by different routes at different times. To a Ranch called Bateman to explore a cave called Styx, the underground river of the dead (bats). One of three rivers crossed by the dead on their way to Hades. Seven to challenge a legend of another time and place. Their Quest, to cross the dread river as the living, explore the kingdom and return to tell the tale.

A most Magnificent Seven, this human six and canine one: Captain Cammo Corcoran, in knightly armor; Ancient spelunker Crafty Chris Williams, with vast experience in underground duels; Major Munchkin Anderson, queen of the dark crawlway; Mighty Mark Porter, the quiet strength of Castle Plano; Daring Danny Sherrod, new to the quest but ancient in willingness; Lord Shane, King of the Canine Speleological Society (K9SS); Humble Major Meister Brau (also known as Captain Commode in deference to the portable potty).

The seven upon a magnificent hill did a great camp raise, fitted with royal luxury of porta potty facilities. A great fire and kingly spirits warmed their souls for the upcoming trial.

A night in repose then a hardy meal before the seven joined into groups of three and four. Three set out for the cave called Styx while four departed in a splendid chariot driven from wheels all four, to offer gifts of gab and pay tribute due the Gentle Queen of Bateman.

After honoring the Gentle Queen, four returned to don protective armors, before journey to an entrance called '63 near another called '64, and near one hopefully to be called '86. Upon shocked eyes befell a scene of hideous destruction from great forces

of nature releasing the oceans of the sky to rampage the earth. Great waters moved loose timber and slimy muds to nearly close the '63, cover the '64 and remove signs of what was to have been the '86. This then passing underground. Great waters sufficient to quench the fires of Hades itself.

Fear gripped the four as they traveled quickly to remnants of the entrance called '63, anxious the underground kingdom suffered eternal destructions. They met the first three returning, telling tales of underground waters unknown in previous times. In a place called Window, waters stood at depths exceeding a tall man's head. The three covered with slimes of the kingdom pled the four to reconsider ingress. At least one of the four, a small furry beast being not a creature of water should stay.

Deaf to all plea's, the four entered the kingdom to witness the changes and cover themselves with slimes in mourning of what was and may never be again. The four; Captain Cammo, Lord Shane, Major Meister Brau, and Major Munchkin journeyed through passage of the kingdom. Awed, they saw; rooms had become lakes, large stones where they were not, and slimes removed, exposing stone floors before unseen.

In a room called Junction through a passage called Gypsum Blister, evidence of floods abounded. Sticks and grasses upon the ceiling and Gypsum Blisters on the floor. Nature again gave testimony of her great strength. Onward they, through a passage called Meat Grinder toward an entrance hopefully to be called '86.

They passed a lead unexplored by any and unknown to but few. Captain Cammo entered to find a labyrinth of passage leading to the unknown. He explored several passages only to discover more passage. Time would not allow exploring all passage. The weekend held great expectations for accomplishing many great deeds. The place called Labyrinth would be a mystery for another day and time.

They sought the entrance hopefully to be called '86 only to find floods

eliminated it for all time. Where once was blue sky was breakdown ceiling. Stones moved and shifted for all time, covered the entrance hopefully to be called '86.

In place of the entrance hopefully to be called '86 came a small passage coated with foam to fill the hearts of the four with awe. Challenge of the passage filled the heart of a serpent with rattles upon its tail with ire. It gave great shakes of its tail filling the kingdom with sound and hearts of the four with fear.

The four expended many hours in witness of the kingdom before tiring and departing to the great camp with portable potty facilities where they again united with the three to become seven once more.

The three, ancient spelunker Crafty Chris, Mighty Mark and Daring Danny had performed walking of ridges and challenged the entrance of a cave called Salinas Bat. The ancient Spelunker entered finding egress difficult. He plead the others not enter.

After retelling the day's journey seven sought repose for the night only to have Nature take revenge for intrusion into the kingdom. Oceans of the sky not used in previous treatment of the cave called Styx were loosed upon the great camp while the seven suffered the night listening to the waters falling upon their marvelous chariots and pup tents.

Early Morn found skies free of water and climes improved from the day before. The seven ate hardy and planned the new day.

Major Munchkin, Major Meister Brau, Mighty Mark and Daring Danny, would enter the entrance called River of the Cave called Styx and attempt journey from a room called Main Bat to a room called Second Bat by way of passage Major Meister Brau discovered on an earlier quest.

Captain Cammo, beaten by a previous week of dueling the Magical Money Machineries of the Mystical Mbank would spend the morning in repose. Ancient Spelunker Crafty Chris would perform walking of ridges seeking magical cures for a knee



damaged dueling fires. Lord Shane would remain with Captain Cammo due to previous lose of joust, in the room called Main Bat.

The new four descended cliffs of Gypsum to the entrance called River where the dread water had risen from passed floods. Major Munchkin donned flotation devices to prevent submersion while Major Meister Brau excavated canals for drainage of the kingdom's river.

Upon ingress was again evidence of the floods. The entrance of the room called Main Bat was direly changed, rocks where they were not and slimes purged from the floors. Covering the ceiling of the room called Main Bat were its name sakes who protested intrusion. Fearing aid be summoned from Main Bat himself, the four fled the area into the passage necessary to complete the quest.

Major Meister Brau ascended into rocky passage of breakdown followed closely by Major Munchkin, and Mighty Mark. Daring Danny bewitched by a sudden attack of good sense opted for egress leaving the foolish Majors alone in the quest.

Major Meister Brau found passage once blocked by a large boulder opened by floods. He journeyed into a large room from whence he summoned Major Munchkin. The Crawlway Queen entered naming the area as the room called Second Bat. The valiant were victorious in at least one of the weekend's quests.

In celebration they journeyed to a room called First Bat before returning for egress. Approaching the exit (also the entrance called River) they saw light. The remaining five, fearing harm had dispatched Captain Cammo to effect rescue. Deeming Rescue unnecessary the Captain toured the connection passage then all withdrew from the cave. The three were met at the entrance by the remaining human three. The remaining three expounded upon their fears, not the least of which was the boiling of their bodily juices from sun exposure.

The human six climbed Gypsum cliffs to meet the canine one and be united as seven again. Two days of quest and great experience but alas, of time all was done. The quest must end and they return to less

magnificent lives in the Metroplex.

To the Metroplex seven rode, by different routes at different times yet still they rode. From a Ranch called Bateman exploring a cave called Styx, the underground river of the dead (bats). One of three rivers crossed by the dead on their way to Hades. Seven challenged a legend of another time and place where they crossed the dread river as the living, and returned to tell the tale.

Their quest, to finish exploration in the underground kingdom of a cave called Styx . But now comes the mysterious labyrinth. Quests are always the same; finish exploration. Quests are always the same; ending with new mysteries. A cave called Styx, on a Ranch called Bateman, "The Never Ending Story."

**TICKS AND TAPE**  
by Dale Ellison

(**Editors note:** I was asked to reprint some old articles from The Maverick Bull. This is one that turned up from back when Dale was the combination Chairman/Newsletter Editor).

OK, as promised in the last issue of the **Maverick Bull**, I included a small humorous glitch about removing seed ticks with the all to useful, **DUCT TAPE**. From the Missouri Speleological Survey's **MSS LIAISON**, a seasonal ranger told some Missouri cavers that the best way to remove them was with **DUCT TAPE**. The tape will not tear the hair off your legs but it does effectively remove the seed ticks.

Well, that was the exciting glitch about **DUCT TAPE** and seed ticks. Being the aggressive Editor/Chairman that I am, I thought I would make a

little test. First, I managed to get a friend of mine to collect some of the smallest ticks that he could find. (He lives out in the country.) Besides, his dog didn't seem to mind giving up fifty or sixty for research.

Now, with ticks in a little container (with some holes cut in the top for ventilation) and my roll of **DUCT TAPE**, I headed for the bathroom. I had a pull-over type T-shirt on that said, "Disinfected," so I slipped it off over my head. Next, I removed a few small balls of lint stuck to the bottom of my feet. I can only assume that your waiting for me to say that the next item to be removed would be my jeans. OK, I slid those down and stepped out. I stepped into the shower (to help corral the fugitive ticks) bent over and removed the lid from the container,

gritted my teeth, and dumped those little boogers in the area of a LARGE stalagmite and sink hole. **DUCT TAPE** handy, I pulled off a strip about two feet long and using a blotting action, I managed to stick two or three. If you're hairy, **DO NOT** blot with the tape and then start to buff back and forth like buffing for a high luster on boots as this technique entangles hair rapidly. I assume that this tick removal test became invalid when the Domino Pizza man arrived and I had to get dressed hastily. **DUCT TAPE** isn't like a pair of bad underwear that creeps up when movement becomes necessary. **DUCT TAPE** digs in deeper with a very authoritative grip to it. Since this turned out to be a bad tick removal test, just disregard what I just wrote.

As always, it is up to the reader to

November 8-10, 1996, Colorado Bend State Park - Contact Butch Fralia (817)346-2039  
November 12, 1996, Maverick Grotto Meeting  
December 13-14, 1996, Colorado Bend State Park - Contact Butch Fralia (817)346-2039  
January 10-12, 1997, Colorado Bend State Park - Contact Butch Fralia (817)346-2039  
February 7-9, 1997, Colorado Bend State Park - Contact Butch Fralia (817)346-2039  
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