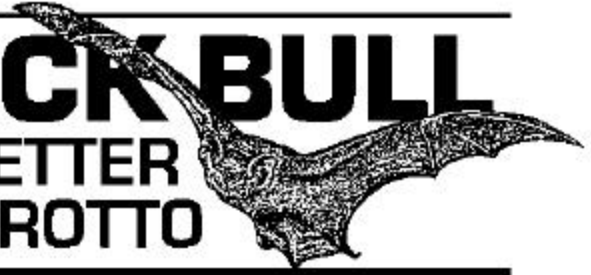

THE MAVERICK BULL

THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER
OF THE MAVERICK GROTTTO



Volume 11, Issue 1

January, 1997



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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 is a scan of our grotto patch.

Other Credits

Editor: Chad Fenner

Editor-in-charge-of-English: Lisa Fenner

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 November Meeting

No December Meeting.
Party Instead.

Editor's Ramblings

Happy January!
Happy New Year!

Well, we're off to our 11th year with a (mostly) new set of officers. (Everyone except me 'n Russell.) I'm excited about the new year and I hope you are too.

You may notice that this issue has only one original article (and I wrote that one), so it's a bit small and full of stuff I found off the Net. Remember, this is your newsletter and can only come about with everyone pitching in a little bit.

I hope I can encourage everyone to share a little bit of his or her unique caving experience by writing either a trip report or technical paper. (Dale's done an excellent job in this area, hasn't he!) Everyone knows something that can be shared by everyone else. For ideas on

subjects, how about: knots and ropework, various electric and carbide lamps, different ascending gear setups, how to get permits from the various cave management resources, cave conservation and restoration, cave photography, cave safety, cave food, camping food and cooking . . .

Hey that last one gives me an idea. How about everyone submit the recipe for your favorite dish to eat while on a caving trip, either in the cave or camping while on a caving trip? I will publish them all in an upcoming newsletter.

Now back to the list . . . camping tips, proper cave etiquette, underwater caving, well, you get the idea. Everyone knows something better than someone else, and this newsletter is the place to share it.

Not to mention any names, but a few did come to mind as I was typing that list.

On trip reports, how about, as a minimum, if you go to a cave (or section of a cave) that you have never been to before, share the experience with us. OK, I admit, Butch writing a trip report for a River Styx trip may be a bit trite considering that he could write the report a month before the trip. On the other hand, reading a first-time account to Styx by someone who's never been there before can bring back memories of all of our first trips there.

I know I've gone on about this for a bit now, but I think that we've got one heck of a newsletter and we can only keep that status by everyone pitching in.

January Meeting

This month's meeting will be held on Tuesday, January 14 at Smokey's Ribs, 5300 E. Lancaster, at 7 p.m.

This month's program was not available at press time but I'm sure something will come together, and

that it will be interesting. Join us for good food and good cave talk.

New Caver Avoids Her First Tight Passageway

Catherine Margaret Fenner recently made her way around the infamously tight passageway known (literally) as the "Birth Canal" by creating a new entrance. (Fortunately, some doctors helped in the dig project and managed to restore the man-made entrance to its original state after the debut.) She made this journey on November 17 and is reported to be doing fine, weighing in at 5 lbs. and 6 oz. with a height of 19 inches. Her exit from the hole was a bit on the early side (5 weeks), but after some time in ICU, she is fine now. Parents, Chad and Lisa, are overjoyed.

Carlsbad Caverns & the Guadalupe Mountains CD ROM Now Available

The Carlsbad Caverns and Guadalupe Mountains Association, along with the Cordilleru Group, have put together a CD ROM that highlights the two national parks.

The CD ROM is available from the Caverns bookstore and is compatible with both the Macintosh and Windows-based computers.

It contains videos, slides, and "mountain fly-throughs", as well as text and games that take the user on a virtual tour of Carlsbad Caverns National Park (CCNP) and the Guadalupe Mountains National Park (GMNP).

Being limited to the two national parks does mean that the neighboring Lincoln National Park doesn't get any attention. Its only mention is a single paragraph and a picture of Sitting Bull Falls buried in the "area attractions" of the GMNP section of the disc.

About half the disk is dedicated to the GMNP, and as such holds little interest to cavers, other than the usual hiking/camping associated with it.

On the other hand, the CCNP section is rich with videos and pictures that highlight the wonders of this national park, and not just the showcave Carlsbad Caverns. It also covers Slaughter Canyon Cave, Lechuguilla, Spider Cave, and Ogle Cave.

The disc is well-presented and put together. There are 34 videos and slide shows. The videos range from 20 seconds to over five minutes and the slide shows consist of from three to 79 slides. The highlights include videos from Lechuguilla and Ogle and a 79-slide presentation from Lechuguilla by such noted cave photographers as Peter and Ann

Bosted, Peter Jones, and Dave Bunell. (Side note: many of the videos are taken from the recent *Spirit of Exploration* video, and Mike Huber is clearly seen in the Ogle sequence.)

Other features include printable maps of both national parks as well as Carlsbad and Slaughter Canyon Cave. There is also visitor information, cave geology and history, and park information, as well as games and quizzes to see if you were paying attention.

If it weren't so enjoyable, I'd think it was a promo just to get you to visit the parks.

This CD was set for release last fall, but for various reasons was delayed. It is well worth the price and wait. Everyone who loves the Guads should check it out.

Announcing TSS Web Site

Bill Elliot

The Texas Speleological Survey is pleased to announce the "TSS Web Site" at <http://www.utexas.edu/depts/tnhc/www/tss>

The site consists of about 1.5 megabytes of data in two dozen linked pages. The site is loaded with information about Texas caves and karst, Texas caving organizations, conservation and safety-minded caving, science, photos, maps, and literature. E-mail links to TSS officers and other Texas cavers are included. No locations are given except for caves that are open to the public.

The purpose of the TSS web site is to educate the public (especially students and teachers) and cavers. We will not be publishing sensitive information here, as the whole world could access it.

For those of you who were invited to test the TSS Web Site for a few days, thank you for your comments. The old address will be discontinued but will provide a link to the new address for a while.

In the future David McKenzie's

WALLS cave surveying program will be available through the site. We could have many more photos and maps--it takes a lot of time to scan images on our flatbed scanner, enhance them, and optimize them so they don't take too much time to download. We may be getting access to a slide scanner before long, which would be wonderful for the photo gallery I've started.

Texas cavers are invited to send us photos and maps for the web site. If you can scan them yourself and send them as attached files with email, that's even better!

If you or someone you know would like to have their email address shown as a direct link as an officer in the page on caving organizations, please let me know and I can do that. This will increase the communication among Texas cavers.

I hope you enjoy the TSS web site! Please send me comments!

New COMPASS Cave Survey Software Release

I want to announce a new release of the COMPASS cave survey software system. There are several new features:

1. NEW WINDOWS COMPILER. The Windows version of COMPASS now has its own survey compiler. The compiler will process survey files of almost unlimited size. File size is only limited by the amount of free memory on your computer. Generally speaking, the compiler will process about 86 miles of cave per megabyte of free memory. As a result, complicated file linking is no longer required. The new compiler is also extremely fast, processing over 12,000 shots per minute.

The compiler has built-in blunder location capability that allows you to zero in on the exact shot that is responsible for large loop errors. Blunder location works by finding the shot and measurement that best repairs a bad loop. Blunder location

is easy to use: "bad" loops are color-coded red, "okay" loops yellow, and "good" loops green. You just point and click, and the compiler displayed a detail list of the most likely blundered shots in the loop. The COMPASS web page has a series of screen images showing the actual process of locating blunder in Lechuguilla Cave.

2. IMPROVED BLUNDER LOCATION. When you are looking for blunders, there are often several shots that are good candidate for blunders. The compiler now has a new feature that helps you zero in on the exact shot that has caused the blunder. It work like this: if you have a blundered shot that is part two loops, then it should show up as a good blunder candidate in both loops. If the shot shows up as good blunder candidate in one, but not in the other, it is very unlikely that the shot is a blunder. When a blunder shows up as a good candidate in two loops, this is called an "intersect." The more loops that a shot shows up as a good blunder in, the more likely it is to be the blunder.

3. NEW WINDOWS INSTALLATION PROGRAM. COMPASS now has a new Windows installation program that handles the whole installation process, including program groups and icons.

4. DOCUMENTATION. There is now more than 150 pages of documentation for the Windows version alone. In addition, the DOS version has more than 200 page of documentation.

5. MINOR IMPROVEMENTS AND BUG FIXES. There are a number of minor improvements and bug fixes in both the Windows and DOS version of COMPASS. I have fixed a problem where the editor created incompatible files when European users entered commas for decimal points. Bugs have been fixed in the SEF converter and the editor now protects against duplicate surveys.

HOW TO GET COMPASS

COMPASS is a shareware product. You can try it out free. If you like it

and want to use it, the cost is \$25.00. If you don't like it, then don't use it and pay nothing.

COMPASS is available free of charge for evaluation purposes. Copies are available through the COMPASS World Wide Web page at:
<http://www.usa.net/~lfish/compass.html>

The Web Page also has full color screen images of some of the most important features. It also has connections to other cave related WWW pages including links to the USGS DEM files. The whole COMPASS package has hundreds of features and a full description of the software is beyond the scope of this document. However, the COMPASS Web Page also has a complete and detailed description all the features and options.

You can also get an evaluation copy of the software directly from me for \$10.00 to cover materials and handling. If you are a registered user you can get an updated version directly from me for only \$5.00. My mailing address is:

Larry Fish
 123 E. Arkansas
 Denver CO 80210

Please specify the size and density of disk: 5.25/3.5, high density/low density. If you like the software, please register. You will receive notification of updates and other special offers.

MORE INFORMATION

If you don't have access to the World Wide Web, or want you want complete information on COMPASS, I can send you a ten page software description. It also gives step-by-step instructions on how to get COMPASS (and other survey programs) via ftp on the Internet. I also have a three page review of COMPASS that appeared in a British caving magazine "Compass Points". If you would like a copy of this information, send an e-mail request to:

lfish@nyx.net
 and I will send you an information

packet.

Conservation Group Appoints New V-P

TCMA Holds Annual Membership Meeting

by Jay Jorden

The Texas Cave Management Association's board of directors has appointed Barbe Barker of Irving, Texas as vice president. Barbe has extensive experience in nonprofit organizations such as TCMA. She is a past patient services director for a Dallas doctors' group and has worked for a state medical foundation, where she gained experience in nonprofits and fund-raising.

Congratulations, Barbe!

At the TCMA's annual membership meeting, two directors were re-elected to three-year terms from 1997 to 1999. They are Bruce Anderson of Fort Worth and Bill Sawyer of Sonora. Also newly elected is Mike Grimm of Austin, who was involved in the creation of TCMA's Whirlpool Cave Preserve and has established a World Wide Web page listing the organization. Congratulations as well to those elected, with appreciation to Jim Wolff for his past board service.

During the Texas Cavers' Reunion weekend at Flat Creek Ranch near Johnson City, members and directors forming a TCMA quorum also heard officer and committee reports during their business session. Treasurer Anderson submitted for approval financial statements from May to August, with the latest showing a balance of more than \$4,500 in the general account. The premium was recently paid for the group's liability insurance. Bruce gave an assessment of TCMA's finances, recommending broadening the membership base and increased funding from other sources, such as

grants.

Noble Stidham discussed the latest *TCMA Activities Newsletter* and other publication plans. Reports were also received from Mike Warton on the management contract for Buttercup Preserve, from the San Antonio cavers on Robber Baron Cave and from Walter Feaster and Gralin Coffin on 0-9 Water Well, Amazing Maze and other UT System caves. A vandal was identified at Buttercup, Robber Baron needs a new lock and there was plenty of caver demand for 0-9 during a Memorial Day weekend trip. Bill Russell also had the latest news on Austin area caves, with Whirlpool a popular destination for TCMA-led group trips.

A detailed policy on visiting TCMA-owned and -managed caves and realignment of membership categories are under discussion. A committee was formed for the latter purpose.

The membership also received reports on other Texas caves of interest. A task force was formed to further investigate two leads.

Plans were tentatively made for work projects at TCMA caves including Whirlpool and Amazing Maze. Carl Ponebshek of San Antonio will attend as TCMA representative to a Government Canyon coalition meeting in November.

Officers attending were Jay Jorden of Dallas, president; Barbe Barker of Irving, vice president; Anderson, treasurer, and Julie Jenkins of Austin, secretary.

Directors included Dan Hogenauer and Carl Ponebshek, both of San Antonio; Ron Ralph of Waco; Russell of Austin; and Stidham of Lubbock. Sawyer was absent.

Julie is writing the official meeting minutes. For more information, please contact her at 10005 Childress Dr., Austin 78753.

Her e-mail is jjules@cris.com

Bits and Tids

I'm sure that you've all seen the commercials for the new batteries. You know, the ones with the built-in tester? Well, rumor has it that these new batteries are not quite as cylindrical as the old ones and as such, don't fit into tight-fitting flashlights and other devices. And if you do manage to get them in, getting them out will be even more of a challenge. What has been especially noted is that they don't fit into the mini-mags that we cavers have all grown so fond of. Just thought I'd pass that along.

Confessions Of A Crack Addict

Paul Steward (Used by permission)

I have read stories in the newspaper and have seen it on TV, but I never thought it could happen to me. I admit now, I was a crack addict. For years cracks ruled my life. When I tried it for the first time I thought I would be stronger than the rest. Boy, was I wrong. I did my first crack with some friends. I was the only one in the group who liked it. When they found out I was still doing cracks, I was cast out of the group. I was made to feel ashamed and looked down upon as a loser.

I soon found new friends who did cracks too. They took me into their group and made me feel wanted. Next I joined the local chapter and then I joined the national organization. I was doing a crack a month and thought I had everything under control. I could stop anytime I wanted to. I just didn't want to. I was having too much fun and it felt so good. After doing all of the cracks close to my home, I was forced to travel farther and farther away to find new ones that gave me the same thrill.

Around this time I started doing vertical cracks.

Friends and family tried talking to me at this point, telling me I didn't need to do cracks and how

dangerous they were. What did they know? I could stop anytime I wanted to. Money started to become a problem. All my equipment, gas, food and lodging costs were putting a strain on our family budget. My wife thought I should cut back on the amount of cracks I was doing. We would argue a lot about this subject.

After a long night trip, I fell asleep at work. The boss found me sleeping and fired me on the spot, calling me a loser and a crack head. When the family went on rides in the country, my face would be glued to the side window looking for cracks. Upon seeing one, I would demand my wife to stop the car. Then I would run like a madman (as if the crack was going to disappear before I got there) to check out the crack. If it was a deep one, I would mark the map and come back later.

If I wasn't in a crack I was reading about one, looking at pictures of one or talking about one. Some mornings I woke up covered with mud, not knowing where it came from. Other times I would wake up inside a crack, not knowing how I got there or how long I had been in there. These blackouts became more and more frequent.

I spent all our children's college funds and our savings on cracks. I was out of control, but didn't know it. Regular cracks and vertical cracks didn't give me the kicks I wanted anymore. I started doing underwater cracks. These are by far the most dangerous of all cracks. At this point my wife and kids left me. I now realized I was hooked on cracks. I had lost my job, my wife and kids were gone and I was losing my life. After hearing of a friend's death in a water crack I knew I had to get control of myself. After a month in a crack rehab I was a new man.

My wife and kids came back and I got a new job.

I still at times, wake up at night thinking I'm in a crack and can even smell the moist air from inside one. I am learning to control my addiction and I am able to do a commercial

crack now and then.

Remember, if a stranger asks you "if it goes," just say no!

CRACKS CAN KILL!

Dues Due!

As I'm sure you are all aware of, as of January 1, no one (to my knowledge) is paid up on their grotto dues. No fear, I will continue to send out the newsletter for a few months as everyone works things out with their accountants and gets the matter behind them.

Announcing a New Publication Series From the Texas Speleological Survey

Monograph 1, "Geomorphology, Hydrogeology, Geochemistry, and Evolution, of the Karstic Lower Glen Rose Aquifer, South-Central Texas" by George Veni

"Texas Speleological Survey Monographs" is a new publication series dedicated to publishing doctoral dissertation, masters theses, and other in-depth studies of Texas caves and karst. Topics may include geological, biological, archaeological, conservation management, and other related sciences. When dissertations and theses are published, they will be reproduced with all of the original content in a formatted, economical, and easy-to-use form. The purpose of the series is to provide easily usable and accessible reports of both high scientific and printed quality, at a minimal cost.

Monograph 1 is Dr. George Veni's doctoral dissertation, completed at the Pennsylvania State University in 1994. It examines aquifer and cave development in the Lower Glen Rose Aquifer within Bexar, Comal, Kendall counties, where many of the longest caves in Texas occur. This publication will be of interest to not only geoscientists and cave

explorers, but to planners, administrators, educators, and citizens who manage or depend on the Lower Glen Rose Aquifer which is a state designated critical water resource of limited supply that is experiencing rapidly increasing demand. This 410 page report includes extensive appendices with cave, well, spring, water level, water quality, and other appendices. Due to the likely interest among nongeologists, an extensive glossary has been added by the author to this reformatted edition.

Monograph 1 will be available at a pre-publication price of \$30 for all orders received by December 10, 1996. Afterward, copies will be available at a cost of \$35. Add \$4 postage and handling to all orders. Few extra copies will be available after the initial order so as to minimize costs. Future printings may be more expensive as publishing costs rise, so order your copy now.

To order, send your check or state purchase order number to:

TSS
c/o Dr. William R. Elliott, Editor
12102 Grimsley Dr.
Austin, TX 78759-3120

The Texas Speleological Survey is a nonprofit corporation organized to compile and manage information on Texas caves and karst. TSS is affiliated with the Texas Memorial Museum at The University of Texas at Austin, the National Speleological Society, and the Texas Speleological Association. TSS's data are published or otherwise generally available for the purpose of promoting exploration, research, education, and conservation of Texas karst resources. For more information about TSS or its other publications, contact the editor at the above address, or at 512-475-8802 or welliott@mail.utexas.edu.

New Mailing list on Cave related

Electronics

Frank Reid

At the Electronics Session at the 1996 NSS Convention it was decided to establish an e-mailing list for discussion of cave-related electronics including "cave radio," electric lights, cave-rescue communications, devices for surveying, instrumentation and data logging, electronic navigation, cave-related applications of amateur radio, etc. This list is primarily about electronic hardware; it is not a cave-mapping software users' group, although that subject is not forbidden. The list is now operational (thanks to Bart Rowlett, bart@wb6hqm.ampr.org) and all interested persons are invited to join. The list is not intended to replace the NSS Electronics Section's paper newsletter.

To join, send email to

speleonics-request@altadena.net

In the first line of the message (not the subject line) write:

subscribe speleonics <your address>

Do not include the <>'s. Having subscribed, send another message to the same address, with the word help on the first line. You will then receive a set of instructions useful for using the list.

Once you have subscribed, sending a message to speleonics@altadena.net will distribute it to all participants. (Caution: Messages arrive addressed from individual originators, so using your mailer's Reply command may not send a message to the entire group.)

What you may not realize is that for the first time in a while, you do not pay the Porters. Sharon Mastbrook will be handling the dues as our newly elected treasurer.

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