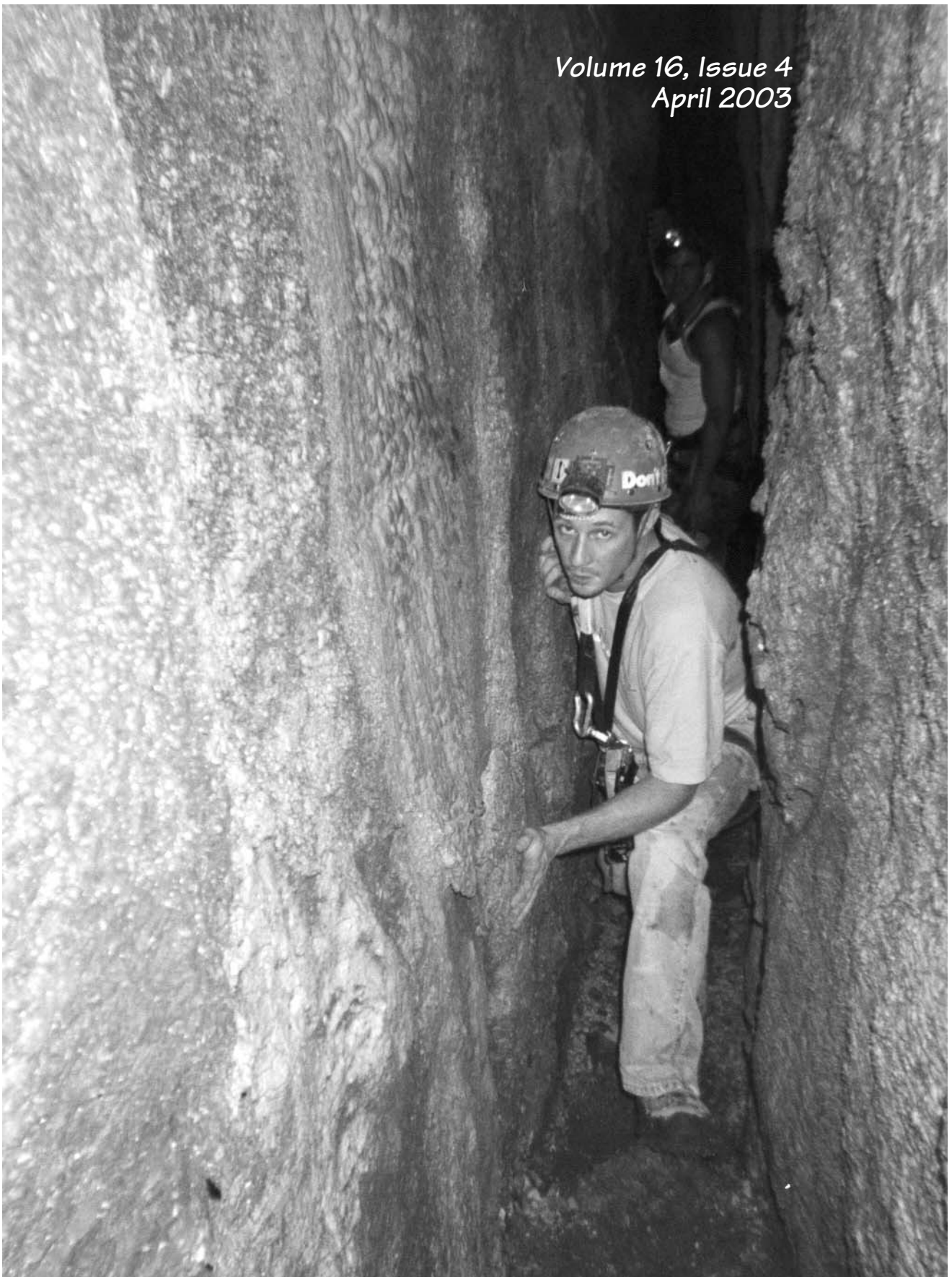


*Volume 16, Issue 4
April 2003*



THE MAVERICK BULL
The Monthly Newsletter Of The Ft. Worth Maverick Grotto

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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, photographs, and other two- and three-dimensional goodies. 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.

Complimentary Newsletters: The Maverick Grotto will provide complimentary 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 per year for nonmembers 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. The time is 7 p.m., and the food is good.

Carbide: Currently carbide is unavailable.

Library: Support your grotto library. Russell Hill is accepting books, magazines, and videos related to caves and caving for our library. Thanks to Russell for his efforts in transporting the library collection to meetings.

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Photos and Artwork

Cover photo: Scott Serur in Polish Pit, Colorado Bend State Park, 2002 TSA Convention, by Diana Tomchick
Page 3: James Savage

Visit Our NEW Web Site!

Check out the site at its new location:
maverickgrotto.org

Pay your 2003 dues to receive the May newsletter!

Mail your dues to Treasurer R.D. Milhollin, or pay him at the meeting.

New Member Profile

Jennifer Peplinski

Most of you probably know by now that I am the wife of Wayne Peplinski, "Caver Extraordinaire" (so he believes). I have been caving on and off for quite a few years with my husband, although at first it was only to obtain insight as to why any person with intelligence would willingly descend into the bowels of the earth for enjoyment...

My cave life began with my very first "wild cave", *River Styx* in King County. That was quite the adventure, since I had no clue about the cave's muddy crawl and the soaking wet exit in front of me. Since then I have traveled with my husband and some new caving friends to New Mexico, Colorado

Bend, and several other areas. Those of you who have caved with Wayne know that the combination of caves and "Caver Extraordinaire" could mean anything, anywhere. Although I am not as extreme as my other half, I enjoy the outdoors a great deal, as well as the



people whom I have met and caved with (or partied with)!

Through our home, I assist my husband in running "Bat World, Trinity River" and since caving and bats go hand-in-hand, it is just another reason (or excuse) to get out without the kids (we have two; one at TCU and another at Lake Worth High School) and pack up the 4X4 with all the necessary essentials for a new adventure! When I am not helping out with "Bat World", I am working at Fifth Avenue Greenhouses, where I enjoy working with a variety of exotic and local plants. In my free time, besides caving and rock climbing, I also enjoy taking our dogs for walks, improving the landscape around our home, and generally spending time with my husband and two girls.

Newsletter Exchange Review

by R.D. Milhollin, NSS 29962

NSS News March 2003 (Vol. 61 No. 03)

Great covers! Front and back! Did anyone notice the back cover is from the Caverns of Sonora? This is the annual "conservation issue" and opens up with articles concerning that topic from Jim Werker and Val Hildreth-Werker and Tom Lera. Al Krause follows up with a description of grants available for cave conservation. Dallas' own Jay Jordan submitted a story about how cavers in Kentucky were instrumental in getting cave vandals prosecuted and convicted. Amy Bern covers a joint initiative between the National Park Service, the NSS, Project Underground, and the American Cave Conservation Association to develop guidelines for the National Park Service Cave and Karst Management Cost Challenge Share Grant. The project wants to reach as many K-12 students in selected US urban areas on the importance of caves and karst. John Wilson details the Group Conservation Award presented annually by the Conservation and Management Section of the NSS. Nomination deadline is the 1st of June. Rick Olson reports on the NSS Restoration Camp at Mammoth Cave National Park. Two and a half tons of waterlogged wood and old cable was removed by backpack and wheelbarrow by 45 volunteers. Abstracts for papers to be presented at the 2003 NSS Convention Conservation and Management Session Restoration workshop are due by May 01.

Hazel Barton penned an interesting article on "Geocaching, Caves, and the NSS". This is certainly a timely article since several members of the grotto are active in this new, high-tech sport made possible by accurate global-positioning system (GPS) receivers. Some of the caches are being placed in caves, and this poses the potential for negative impact to the cave as well as injury to non-cavers searching for the hidden cache. There is a section devoted to several articles concerning the Indiana Cave Conservancy. Kriste Lindberg contributes the "Indiana Cave Conservancy Education and Outreach Report" which details the various activities the Conservancy's Education and Outreach Committee has been involved in during the last year. The Storm Drain Marking Program, for instance, involves school children in marking storm sewer drains that flow directly to surface streams with messages like "DUMP NO WASTE, DRAINS TO STREAM." Keith Dunlap reports on how "Abandoned Mines Become Protected Bat Habitat" and on "Buddha Karst Nature Preserve Stewardship Activities."

Jeff Bray sent in copy and photos for "Updates on Some Ex-Tropical Destinations, Brought to you by The West Virginia Cave Conservancy." These guys have paid off a cave entrance, and purchased another one that allows access to fourteen miles of passage. Marianne Russo writes in with "Greetings from the Western Cave Conservancy." This is the newest regional cave acquisition and management organization in the US. "An Update on the Kentucky TriModal Transpark" is provided by the KEEP



(Karst Environmental Education and Protection) Steering Committee. This massive paved "inland port" is to be built in the sinkhole-filled plain between Mammoth Cave and Bowling Green. Thanks to an NSS Conservation Grant the local grassroots opposition to the Transpark facility has been bolstered with public education on cave conservation and environmental issues. KEEP has produced a video and several brochures, brought a speaker to a forum held in Bowling Green, and produced two major reports in response to reports issued by the Transpark's sponsoring agency and its consultants. Nature pitched in to the community awareness effort by opening up a huge sinkhole just south of town. To the north the Ohio Valley Region's 2002 Conservation Project was held at the Richmond Creek Cave System in Kentucky. As reported by Kevin Toepke, OVR Secretary, there were three main areas of focus: trash removal from Hillside Cave, graffiti removal from Richmond Creek Cave, and trash removal from Disappointment Pit. Kevin reports on several methods the teams tried for graffiti removal, and includes some nice before-and-after photos to illustrate their results.

This month's plug for the NSS Convention, to be held at the feet of the Sierra Nevada mountains in California this August, deals with the caving adventures of John Muir. A Scottish immigrant, Muir was of course a naturalist, a writer, an inventor, a biologist, one of the early strong proponents for the establishment of national parks, and one of the founders of the Sierra Club. Muir caved at Horse Cave and Mammoth Cave in Kentucky, and Bower Cave and Cave City Cave, both in California, among probably many others. Muir has been adopted as the "mentor" for the 2003 Convention. In late breaking news, it looks as though there will be a Stereo Photography Symposium at this year's Convention.

In "Society News" there is a column dealing with the NSS Library collection, written by long time member and contributor Jeanne Gurnee. The efforts of the Huntsville Grotto to catalogue the collection and the 27 years of volunteer work by the librarian are noted, although no mention is made of the recent rumors of attempts to move all or part of the collection to a U.S. government facility in New Mexico. Next door at society HQ, a NSS Bookstore marketing person and a Marketing Analysis Committee Chair are needed. Gordon Birkheimer warns members whose membership renewals come up in the spring to get it done in time to be included in the 2003 Member's Manual. Does anyone with a computer and OCR software want to scan back issues of the *News* so the complete indices can be put online? Get in touch with the NSS Executive Vice President. The news of the acquisition of Great Expectations Cave in Wyoming is all over! The NSS is looking for money from members to help pay for the loan taken to pay for the cave. If every member ponied up just \$17 the account could be closed immediately (The Maverick Grotto is collecting donations from members and other interested cavers for this purpose. Please contact Diana Tomchick or RD Milhollin if you are interested in chipping in). If you want to present a paper at the National Cave and Karst Management Symposium in Gainesville Florida in October, get that abstract in!

In "News and Notes" Louise Hose is named as the first director of the National Cave and Karst Research Institute, based in Carlsbad New Mexico. A French team has

established the world's deepest cave record, 1733 meters (5686 feet), in the Gouffre Mirolda during January of 2003. In Florida, the state has purchased the land over the longest underwater cave system in the US, fourth longest in the world. The Wakulla System lies in the Woodville Karst Plain south of the capital city of Tallahassee. Forty-five cave "experts", members of several grottos in the New York area, cleaned up Howe Caverns. Three tons of river gravel was removed by five gallon buckets. The "Spelean Spotlight" shines on Cheryl Jones this month. She is a member of the NSS BOD, the National Cave and Karst Management Symposium liaison to the NSS, and chair of the NCKMS Steering Committee. She tells of her early start in caving, early wall climbing explorations in Ellison's and Tumbling Rock Caves, explorations in Oman, and the tragic disappearance of her husband Don. "Jay's Journal" reviews grotto newsletters. Wisconsin Speleological Society members dug open a filled sinkhole cave entrance and stabilized it with a plastic culvert pipe complete with welded ladder. The Central Indiana Grotto (*CIG Newsletter*) shows Rosalie Adams doing her first crawlway, with a pacifier in her mouth. She is about two years old. There is a story in there about "Texas Bear Cave". The *Birmingham Grotto Newsletter* features veteran TAG cavers Bobby Dodson, Terry Ragon, and Martha Hendrix describing exploration of caves in Alabama. A "girl trip" through Virginia's Cave Spring Cave has *Good Morning America's* Diane Sawyer making her first cave trip. Another caver was struck by a nine cubic foot rock while caving. He and his partner completed a self-rescue, and he was later diagnosed with a strained back and broken ribs. His lessons: always cave with more than two people, be careful around breakdown, and carry plenty of webbing! In the December 2002 *Windy City Speleonews*, Matt Heuser describes a canoe trip into Devil's Icebox Cave in Missouri. As they are exploring upstream, the water level rises to the point that the pre-painted "no exit" sign placed before a section of low ceiling is submerged. In South Dakota some new passage has been mapped in Wind Cave National Park, according to *The Carbide Flash* of the Paha Sapa Grotto. In the *West Virginia Caver* there are accounts of newly discovered cave entrances in Randolph County, an accident involving a moving half-ton boulder and a pinned caver, and a new dug entrance into long-closed Maxwellton Cave.

In the "Letters" section, Alexander Klimchouk of the UIS (International Union of Speleology) Commission on Karst Hydrogeology and Speleogenesis and the IGU (International Geographic Union) Karst Commission announces the establishment of a Virtual Journal of Speleogenesis and Evolution of Karst Aquifers. Art Palmer of the US is one of the journal's editors. Most of the content will be reprints of Symposia papers and articles from more traditional journals that address issues related to cave formation. Evelyn Bradshaw writes in to suggest somewhat of a compromise position for the old, nagging question about what to do about the *Journal of Cave and Karst Studies* published by the NSS and mailed to members. Apparently a significant number of NSS members don't read the *Journal* and would like to see it become an option available at additional cost.

Continued on back cover

Caving Events Calendar, April 2003

compiled by R.D. Milhollin

- Apr 11-13** **Colorado Bend State Park Project:** Long-time favorite of Mavericks, pretty close to home, semi-regular schedule, second weekend of the month. Lots of activities available for all caving skill levels, several mapping trips usually going on. Great beginner project. **Contacts:** Terry Holsinger (515) 443-4241 trhli@sprynet.com or Dale Barnard (512) 847-1521 Barnarddale@yahoo.com
- Apr 26-27** **High Guads Restoration Project:** (New Mexico): On-going work amid spectacular scenery in beautiful caves of the Lincoln National Forest. Last weekend of the month, Permits often include Three Fingers, Virgin, Pink Dragon, Pink Panther, Hidden, Wonderland, and Black Cave. Activities vary from month to month. **Contact:** Susan Herpin sherpin@zianet.com
- Apr 26-27** **Government Canyon State Natural Area Project:** 20 miles northwest of San Antonio. Survey, exploration, ridge-walking, and digging. Participants must enter property with group, contact in advance for times and directions. **Contacts:** Marvin and Lisa Miller mllmiller@gvtc.com
- May 02-04** **TSA Spring Convention:** Cascade Caverns, Boerne, Texas. TSA Store, TSS Bookstore, and other Speleovendors, Saturday presentations -- contact Christi Bennett if you want to give a talk, Saturday Salons from 9-4, with great prizes. Limited sign-up cave trips, including: Vertical (peep in the Deep Entrance to Cascade Caverns), Restoration (in the commercial section), Rugged (vertical and wet caving at the back of the cave), Photo (after-hours photographer's tour at Cave without a Name). Saturday dinner is barbeque & sides, bring your own dishes and utensils. TSA meeting on Sunday at 10:00 am. All Texas cavers invited! **Contact:** Christi Bennett 210-344-7149(h), 210-377-8413(w) c.bennet@chfbc.org
- May 02-04** **KaRST Weekend, Blanchard Springs Caverns:** The Karst Resources Support Team (KaRST) and U.S. Forest Service (USFS) are sponsoring a weekend at Blanchard Springs Caverns (BSC) to bring together cavers/grottoes from Oklahoma, Missouri, and Arkansas to discuss karst conservation, biology, and geology. The USFS Sylamore Ranger District has reserved a group campsite, a pavilion for eating and socializing, the amphitheater for presentations and slide shows, and is offering free cavern tours after hours. The USFS is also reserving cave permits for other caves in the area and delineating areas for ridge walking with high cave development potential. RSVP prior to April 25th. **Contact:** David Kampwerth, 501-513-4477 david_kempworth@fws.gov, Blanchard Springs Caverns for cavern questions, 870-757-2211; USFS for questions on lodging/dining and the community of Mountain View, 870-269-3228
- May 03-04** **Robber Baron Cave, San Antonio:** first weekend of each month, a new and ongoing project to restore the collapsed entrance to this popular Texas cave. Initial tasks include clearing dead trees and surveying. Plans for the entrance ramp, bunker and surrounding grounds will be developed. Please contact if you are coming, and if you are bringing a truck or a chainsaw for clearing the bigger trees. **Contacts:** Linda Palit (210) 699-1388 lkpalit@swbell.net or Evelyn Mitchell, joe-evelynn@satx.rr.com
- May 09-11** **Colorado Bend State Park Project**
- May 17** **Texas Speleological Survey Work Session (Austin):** Not really "caving", but potentially helpful for Texas caves and personally enlightening. Saturday at 10:00 am. Familiarize yourself with the Texas Cave Files and meet cavers. Be sure to call or e-mail one of the contacts to be put on the admission list to the closed campus in Austin where the files are kept. A detailed map to Pickle Research Campus can be found at <http://www.utexas.edu/maps/prc>, the building is 18-A. **Contacts:** Ron Ralph (512) 916-9190 r-dralph@texas.net, Jim Kennedy (512) 663-2287 jkennedy@batcon.org, James Reddell (512) 471-1075
- May 23-26** **Kentucky Speleofest 2003, "Caving the Big Ones":** 32nd annual caving festival, hosted by the Louisville Grotto, at Camp Carlson, near Fort Knox, Kentucky. In addition to exploring local caves, a Cave Congo Party is the featured entertainment for Saturday evening. You can find more information on the web site, along with the pre-registration form at: <http://www.caves.org/grotto/louisvillegrotto/>
- May 24** **Hard Bargain Digging Project:** Will this dig lead to massive borehole? Be there to help and find out! **Contacts:** Mark Gee (972) 557-1503 or Keith Heuss Keith.Heuss@lcra.org
- May 24-25** **Government Canyon Karst Survey**
- May 31-Jun 01** **High Guads Restoration Project**
- May 31** **Texas Speleological Survey Board Meeting:** Begins at 10:30 am. at the J.J. Pickle Research Center in North Austin. **Contacts:** Ron Ralph (512) 916-9190 r-dralph@texas.net, Jim Kennedy (512) 663-2287 jkennedy@batcon.org, James Reddell (512) 471-1075 jreddell.caves@mail.utexas.edu
- Jun 14** **Outdoor Adventure Day, Dallas Museum of Natural History:** How often does a caver get the chance to climb on a public building? The answer: at least once a year. The DFW and Maverick grottos have been invited to demonstrate SRT climbing and rappelling on the front wall of the Dallas Museum of Natural History, from 11 am to 4 pm. In past years, the museum supplied all participants with a free lunch and unlimited bottled water. **Contact:** Dave Gers davegers@ieee.org
- Jun 14** **Texas Speleological Survey Open House (Austin):** an excellent opportunity to visit the TSS facilities, explore the files, meet other cavers and eat a bite of burnt meat. **Contacts:** Ron Ralph (512) 916-9190 r-dralph@texas.net, Jim Kennedy (512) 663-2287 jkennedy@batcon.org, James Reddell (512) 471-1075 jreddell.caves@mail.utexas.edu
- Jun 21-28** **NCRC Cave Rescue Operations and Management Seminar:** held at Camp Washington Ranch, NM. Extensive classroom and fieldwork in all phases of cave rescue; basic, intermediate, and advanced courses will be offered. Each course provides 100 hours of instruction over the eight-day seminar. Register by May 12 to avoid late fee. For a detailed course description, fee structure, meal and lodging arrangements, and registration form, visit the seminar web site at <http://www.caves.org/ncrc/seminar2003.htm> Please direct all comments to John Panches, National Coordinator, National Cave Rescue Commission of the National Speleological Society, national@ncrc.info
- Jun 28-29** **Government Canyon Karst Survey**
- When Scheduled **Carlsbad Caverns and Fort Stanton Cave Restoration:** New Mexico restoration trips in large, sensitive caves. CRF trips have unique requirements, long holiday weekends. **Contact:** Barbe Barker (505) 687-4270 cloudcaver@pvtnetworks.net
- When Scheduled **Val Verde and Sutton County Caves:** Sensitive landowner relations, visits by appointment only. **Contact:** R.D. Milhollin (817) 834-2327 rdmilhollin@maverickgrotto.org

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Literary curmudgeon Bill Mixon reviews *Caving* by Peter Swart, and he is pleasantly surprised that it is not as abysmally bad as the book of the same title by Steven Boga. Mixon grants that it is actually “a fairly good elementary introduction to caves and caving, with plenty of safety, conservation, and land-owner relations crammed into the brief text...” Of course the hilarious omissions are highlighted, like Ellison’s Cave in Georgia being 1000 meters deep, but nothing really dangerous. Some cave photographers are screaming however, since the photo credits on the last page appeared out of nowhere, apparently for some other book.

C.O.G.nizance March 2003

Central Oklahoma Grotto is also working to raise donations for the recent NSS purchase of Great Expectations Cave. They are also hosting a local Boy Scout troop that wants to go caving. Trip reports include Cattle Cave, which sounds great for those who love thick oozing, caking mud. The trip reports seem to get muddier as time goes on. There is a report on a bat count trip to Selman Cave System. Author Jon Woltz was amazed at the size of a room there known as the Root Dome, with some house-sized breakdown inside. They found a great number of the fuzzy little mammals hiding in there. Lil Town and Duane Del

Vecchio add that the bats were not in their usual places. Steve Beleu writes of a trip to the Wichita Bat Caves in western Oklahoma. He reflects on some of the many mistakes made during that trip, including misreading maps, missing cave passages, disorientation, “groupthink”, and associated and related causes and effects. With the benefit of “butt-vision” (hindsight) he offers suggestions for future avoidance of these situations in a humorous, no, hilarious narrative. This guy writes well. Lil and Duane discuss a trip to Jester in order to, you guessed it, count bats. Durn, couldn’t they just say there are bunches and bunches of bats in the caves of Oklahoma? NO! They have to organize the numbers into a concise, finely-organized, easily readable chart on page 6 so you can see for yourself what the numbers are, organized by species nonetheless. This is a great edition, Good work neighbors to the near north.

The Oztotl Caver March/April 2003 (Vol. 22 No. 3/4)

Will Harris graces the cover of this first bi-monthly publication from the eastern end of the Metroplex. Jerri Pearson makes a special return, appearance as guest editor since Mike was just too busy to do the newsletter, given two months! Geeze. Great Job Jerri! The work at Robber Baron Cave in San Antonio is reported, several photos show before and after the concrete “bunker” was built. This is a new, ongoing project of the TCMA (Texas Cave Management Association) and volunteers are needed to help in reclaiming the entrance.

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