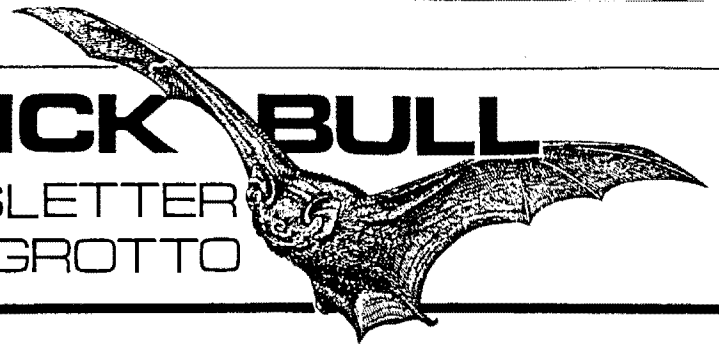


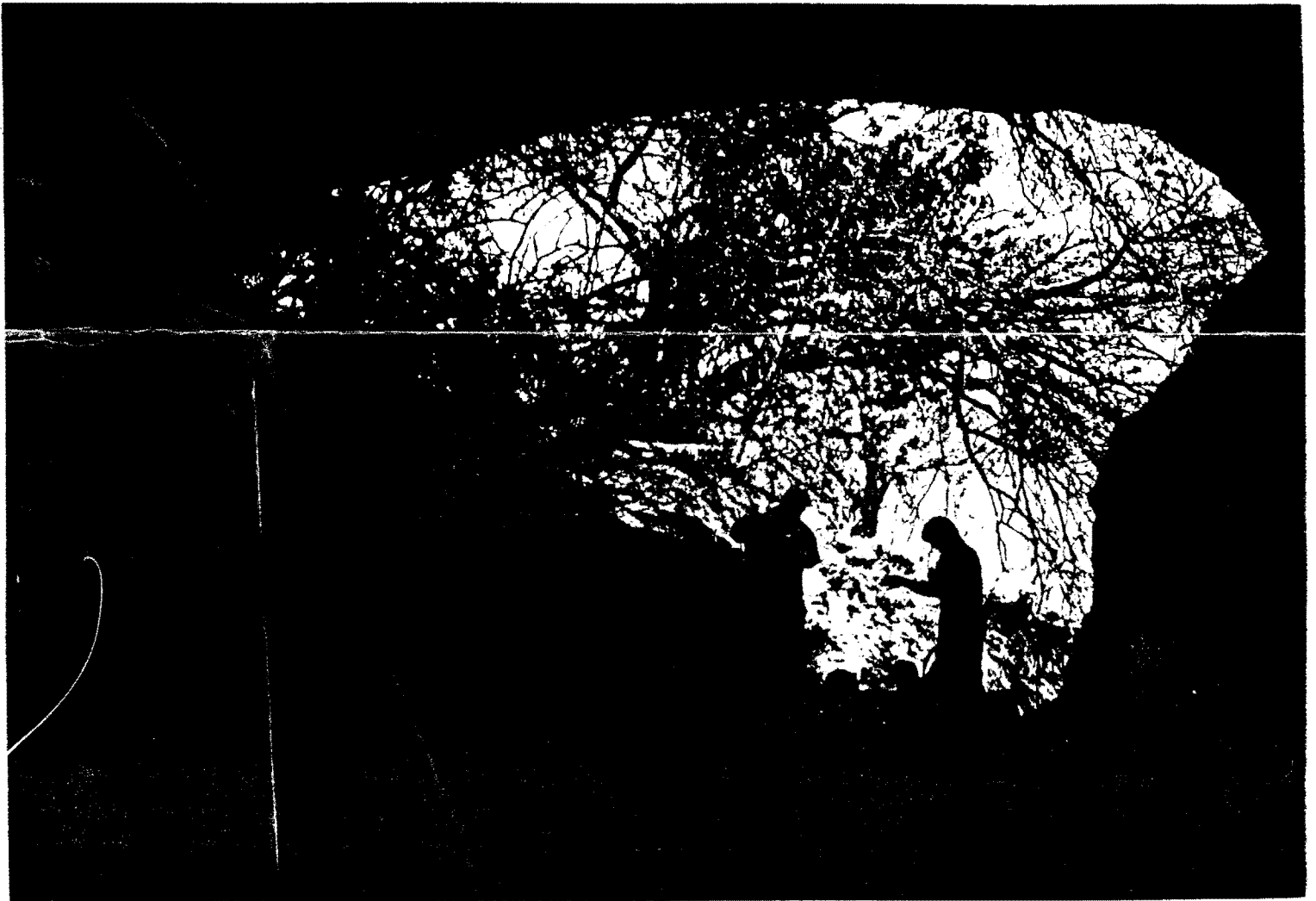
THE MAVERICK BULL

THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER
OF THE MAVERICK GROTTTO



VOLUME 4 NUMBER 2

FEBRUARY 1989



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THE MAVERICK BULL is the monthly newsletter of THE MAVERICK GROTTO, an internal organization in the National Speleological Society (NSS 6-322). The editors invite 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. Items should be of interest to cavers and be non-political 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 GROTTO address at the time of publication. Other organizations should contact the grotto at the address herein.

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

COMPLIMENTARY NEWSLETTERS: THE MAVERICK GROTTO will provide complimentary newsletters to persons or organizations who provide cave access (i.e. landowners) or otherwise provide assistance to cavers. The Grotto will also provide three free issues to persons interested in becoming members.

MEMBERSHIP POLICY: Any caver 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 East Lancaster, Fort Worth. It is a little less than one mile west of Loop 820 East and next door to a K Mart. The time is 7:00 P.M., and the food is good.

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CAVE RESCUE: Call Collect 512-686-0234

CALENDAR

Ongoing	Monthly work trip to Colorado Bend State Park. Weekend of the second Saturday of each month.
Feb. 10-12	Colorado Bend State Park Work Trip.
Feb 14	Maverick Grotto Meeting.
March 10-12	Colorado Bend State Park Work Trip.
March 14	Maverick Grotto Meeting.
March 18-26	Possible work trip to Devils River State Park. Number of people limited. Contact Butch Fralia (817-346-2039) or Keith Heuss (512-385-7131).
April 1-2	Longhorn Cavern Cleanup project. A dirty job but we get the use of Longhorn Cavern to explore off the commercial trail. More details later.
April 7-9	Colorado Bend State Park Work Trip.
April 11	Maverick Grotto Meeting.
April 28-30	TSA Spring Convention, Luchenbach, Texas. More details as they become available.
May 9	Maverick Grotto Meeting.
May 12-14	Colorado Bend State Park work Trip.
June 9-10	Colorado Bend State Park Work Trip.
June 13	Maverick Grotto Meeting.
October 1989	American Cave Management Symposium, sponsored by TSA, TFPD, ACMA. To be held in New Braunfels, Texas.

ON THE COVER A couple of Maverick Grotto cavers at the entrance to Gorman Cave in Colorado Bend State Park, in San Saba County, Texas. The Maverick Grotto is taking a big part in the TSA project helping the Texas Parks & Wildlife Dept. explore and survey the new park.

MINUTES OF THE JANUARY MEETING:

The regular monthly meeting of the Maverick Grotto took place on 10 January 1989. Chairman Dale Ellison introduced a few visitors and treasurer Teresa White announced that we have \$342.66 in our account. We then had a discussion of our finances. Steve and Pat Gentry had rescued us by printing our January newsletter, and have said that they will continue. But in case they can't keep it up indefinitely, we need to have a way to pay \$50 to \$70 per month for printing costs, if that becomes necessary.

After a lengthy discussion of raising the dues to as high as \$20, David Finfrock moved that we set dues at \$10 for 1989 for each newsletter mailed (Couples receiving one newsletter will not have to pay twice). The motion carried by a vote of 13 to 1.

Danny Sherrod reported that he has found a good source for sewing harnesses, etc... See Danny for details. He also asked that anyone with an idea for a program to please contact him.

Terry Holzinger announced the TSA Project Winter meeting at Powell Cave for 28-29 January. (See report in this newsletter.)

Russell Hill suggested we start a grotto library and volunteered to take on the job. (More details in this newsletter.)

Butch Fralia then provided the program, an audio-visual slide program on the proposed Texas Cave and Groundwater Protection Act now before the Texas Legislature. The Maverick Grotto supports the passage of this important legislation. (More details below.)

Many thanks to the grotto membership for all the contributions to this newsletter. It sure makes the Editor's job easier. Keep it coming!

CAVE LAW
by Butch Fralia

The Cave Ground Water Bill has been introduced into the '89 legislature as HB-533. It needs all the support it can get.

The Cavern Protection Bill has hit a snag. The legal committee doesn't like the liability section of the Bill and may either rewrite that section, delete it or cause the Bill to be deleted. No one can ascertain for sure the problem but it's disappointing because the only part of the Bill which offered any benefit to cavers was the removal of landowner liability. This would open many properties to cavers where owners are afraid of being sued.

These Bills need your help, please contact your representative and voice your support. State legislatures state that receiving as many as six letters on a single subject indicates there is indeed a public interest in a particular subject.

NOTES FROM THE TREASURER

Well it's that time again. The Grotto dues are due and if you haven't heard, it's only \$10.00. Not bad for all you get; meetings, parties, friends, camping... all kinds of fun. Oh yeah, you get to explore some neat caves too. The Maverick Grotto's Constitution says that the money is due by the March meeting. If you can't pay me at the meetings, you can always mail it to me. By the way, I'm the treasurer, Teresa White, and my address is: 5424 Finian, North Richland Hills, TX 76180.

LONGHORN CAVERN STATE PARK CLEANUP PROJECT
by Butch Fralia

Texas Parks and Wildlife, has offered cavers the project of cleaning Longhorn Cavern and a sink hole which is on the property. We are under no obligation to undertake this project but it needs doing. The sinkhole has been used as a dump since the CCC (Civilian Conservation Corps) cleaned the cave out during the great depression. Inside the cave are Civil Defense rations, placed there in case of national emergency, which are 15 years out of date, these need to be removed. There has been a movement underway to charge the state for the cleanup. Unfortunately, this changes the original agreement we have and since we (cavers) only recently have lived up to our part of the agreements and got in their good graces, it seemed like a poor idea. There was a great deal of discussion but finally it was voted the cleanup would occur the first weekend in April and there would be no attempt at charging. Most everyone was happy with this decision, a few weren't but that couldn't be helped. We get the use of Longhorn Cavern after the cleanup, we do a good deed and create exceptional goodwill with TPWD for future projects (of our choosing). Remember that all state property is actually the property of the taxpayers (which includes cavers) and anything which saves tax dollars is great especially when you can have fun doing it.

There was considerable discussion of TPWD matters and in general everyone is happy (both state and cavers). The cave management recommendations for cave access, to be presented to the state will be the next big issue.

PROPOSAL FOR A GROTTA LIBRARY
By Russell Hill

At the January meeting I announced my decision to organize the Maverick Grotto Library. The project is intended to provide an additional activity for our meetings as well as a medium for the exchange of materials. I consider the formation of the library to be a joint effort with all members contributing and receiving equitably. Donations of books, periodicals, maps, videocassettes, or slides can be made on a monthly, yearly, or semi-permanent basis. It is not necessary for items to be directly related to caving, but should be within the scope of a caving lifestyle. This includes first aid, camping, mountaineering, sciences, music, scuba, vehicle repair, terrestrial navigation, physical fitness, and white-water boating.

The library will be present (if I am) at the designated Grotto meeting place and should receive most activity early enough to allow time for normal meeting functions. Materials will be available for use to everyone in attendance on the meeting night but restricted to current Grotto members for monthly check-out. Visitors, associates, or other non-members may checkout items with the approval of a member. All materials will be checked out on a monthly basis unless other arrangements are made. Because of the tenacious personal concepts and extreme expense many of us have involved, an intense effort should be made to maintain the integrity of the library and guarantee the prompt return of all materials.

The next meeting on February 14 will be the initial presentation of the library and its success will be dependent on donations and member involvement. So let's all work together to make this project entertaining and useful for everyone.

A MESSAGE
From Quinta Wilkinson

This is about holding groups together. Mavericks have a good thing going. But we have people in Louisiana, Waco, Wichita Falls, and Austin. This means newsletters are important in keeping a lot of you in touch. The group that caves alot will keep in touch, but even those in the Metroplex who don't cave regularly will feel left out if everyone does not add their bit to the newsletter. Most of the newsletter seems to be written by only one group.

The Caver has recently pulled all TSA back together because of trip reports, etc. For years the trip reports had all come from one or two grottos. Don't get me wrong, I love hearing about Austin. They are good cavers and good friends, but I'd like to hear what Lubbock is doing for instance.

I'd also like to hear what you're doing. Why don't you write a report. Even a vacation high light if you checked out land owner contacts.

"I don't hear you!"

IT DON'T GET NO BETTER THAN THIS
By Mark Porter

Dates: December 26-30

Location: Central Missouri

Personnel: Donna & Bruce Anderson, Dale Ellison, Arlene Heintz, Dawn Burrow,
Dennis Thompson & friend, and Mark Porter.

In the wee hours of the morning of December 26, I stumbled downstairs, found the television remote control, and clicked my way to the Weather Channel for final confirmation on the weather conditions in Missouri. According to this professional weather person (editor's note: This wasn't David!), possible light rain today clearing with temperatures in the 40's and 50's the next several days. No problem, for this time of year that's a pretty good forecast for a week's worth of caving.

Dawn arrived at the house and we proceeded toward our destination of Bennett Springs State Park. After a non-eventful trip, we met up with Bruce and Donna at the park. Since they were the only people in the park, not even the park ranger showed up that day, it wasn't too difficult to find the campsite. One of the main reasons this park was chosen was the facilities: hot showers, clean restrooms, and a laundry. Due to the time of year, the water was turned off, the laundry was closed, and restrooms were locked. We did, however, have access to a Port-a-Pot with a cold seat.

Weather Update: Overcast, humid, winds southerly 20 mph, gusting to 35, rain.

Shortly after we arrived, Dale and Arlene pulled up (with Arlene's father, Earl). We geared up and headed for our first destination of Dr. Lewis Cave. This cave had easy access, off the paved road, through a couple of cattle gates to a gravel loop drive. This put us within ten yards of the cave's entrance.

The cave started with a borehole passage about twenty feet high and continued for a quarter mile. The passage was mainly walking with a touch of climb and crawl to it.

A hundred yards into the cave we came upon a creature not found in many caves. It seems a bird dog had wandered or chased something too deep into the cave. The dog must have been in for several days due to the thinness of the animal. Dale and Donna made a rescue and led the dog to the entrance. Donna and Bruce had a couple of their dogs in their van, so Donna gave it a well needed dinner of dog food.

Toward the mid part of the cave, there is a tight squeeze beside a formation and then a stream passage. The water was no more than knee deep, the ceiling was about eight feet high and covered with soda straws, stalagmites and helectites. This section continued for several hundred feet. Donna and Dawn pushed the, by now, shrinking passageway until it became impassable due to size and fear of breaking formations. The total time spent in the cave was four or five hours.

Weather Update: Strong gusty winds, heavy rains and dropping temperatures, snow.

Tuesday morning broke with rain and cold temperatures. By ten o'clock the rain began to turn to snow. The troop tried to drive to Lone Onyx Cave some sixty miles to the northwest of camp. The snow was heavy and made travel on the highway too hazardous to proceed. So, what do stranded cavers do in Lebanon, Missouri during a blizzard? Spend several hours in the local laundromat, of course.

Dale had to take Arlene home, so after doing cave clothes from the previous day's trek, the weather too cold to go outside, sitting in a laundromat can slowly drive you mad. Waiting for Dale's return, the subject of his nickname came up. If you are not familiar with it, his honored title, "The Rain God", came about as a result of unfortunate luck with weather on caving trips. He developed a high ratio of rained-on cave trips to total cave trips taken. Being stuck in a laundromat for a good part of an afternoon due to near blizzard conditions, Dale has been bestowed a new title. Many ideas were bounced around, The All-Weather God, The Storm God, and many others. One member of the party came up with the perfect title. Henceforth when the weather has frost in the air and the leaves turn beautiful colors, he shall be known as

To be continued

My daughter, Arlene, invited me to join her and her friends on a local Ozark cave trip. The cave is located less than an hour's drive from my home. For want of a better name it is called Dr. Lewis Cave.

The cave entrance is broad and high. A small stream exits the cave to flow down a steep draw. About ten minutes into the cave we discovered a small hound dog that had spent at least several days in the dark. He was given a guided tour to the entrance and provided with food.

On the second trip into the cave passage, I had more time to observe my surroundings. The first time, I had spent most of my time watching the floor of the passage to select a route that would keep my feet dry. The passage was high and wide. There were no cave formations but the ceiling glistened with moisture that gave the appearance of polished metallic beads.

The easy going did not last long. Soon we came to break-downs that required some dedicated scrambling. Beyond the break-downs, I made the acquaintance of cave mud. Mud on the surface waits to be stepped on. Cave mud waits in ambush and attacks as soon as your attention wanders.

Just beyond the breakdowns, the ceiling and walls moved in on us. The stream occupied the center of the passage and it was necessary to wade. The flow was slow, and mud covered the bottom altogether too deeply. During this phase of cave exploration, I had the opportunity to do some duck walking. It is very good exercise.

This section of the cave had beautiful formations. The ceiling was almost covered with white soda straws. Stalactites were common but stalagmites were relatively rare and stunted. A few flow stone formations were also present.

The low ceiling continued to the end of the cave and provided no opportunity to stand. Rest could be obtained by sitting on the edge of the stream with feet immersed in water and bottom resting on mud. Caving is not for the comfort lover or the fastidious.

The trip out of the cave was uneventful. However, I was very happy to reach the section of cave that permitted me to stand again.

Although my first cave visit occurred during my grammar school days and since then I have seen caves in California, Oregon, Nevada, New Mexico, Kentucky, and Missouri, this was my first visit to a "wild" cave. I enjoyed the experience very much and would enjoy doing it again.

I was surprised to find that a few lights provided such good general illumination. I thought that only things in the cone of light would be visible and everything else would be in impenetrable darkness.

Some muscle soreness was produced by the extended duck walking. However, my doctor says that I will soon be able to get around again with the aid of a cane or crutches (just kidding).

RETURN TO RIVER STYX

By Pooch Amy

Date: January 28
Location: King County, Texas
Personnel: Terry Ward, Terry Benton, Sharon Lytle, Jean Might, Dale Ellison, Tom Rich, Cindy, Harold McAllister, Miles Cleveland, M.T., Pooch Amy.

From the beginning, Dale kept us right on schedule, but not until the last leg of the trip did I realize ... his watch must have been set to Mountain Time. We all gathered together for the first time at "Whataburger", got acquainted with each other's names and mannerisms (or lack of mannerisms), over a quick breakfast social, then divided into the three vehicles that were taking us to River Styx: "smoking", "non-smoking", and "beans-for-dinner-last-night".

After four hours of leap frog, and a hearty lunch stop in Benjamin, Texas, we arrived at Bateman Ranch 12 PM Mountain Time, right on schedule. This was to be a new experience for most of the group, but after a few minutes of instructions and introductions to the equipment, you'd have never known it. Dale led the way, acting as trail blazer/tour guide, and the rest showed no hesitation at the tight entrance crawl. Dale asked that I (beans for dinner last night) bring up the rear.

Days of heavy rains had preceded us, but River Styx Cave had less mud than my own carpet, yet the same amount of wildlife. Bats hung in sleeping clusters on the ceiling, breathing like furry Scottish Bagpipes, catfish stirred up little clouds of wet dust behind their tails, and crickets did ... whatever crickets do. At one point, when we were all belly down, we met another belly down caver, a tiger salamander. (see illustration)

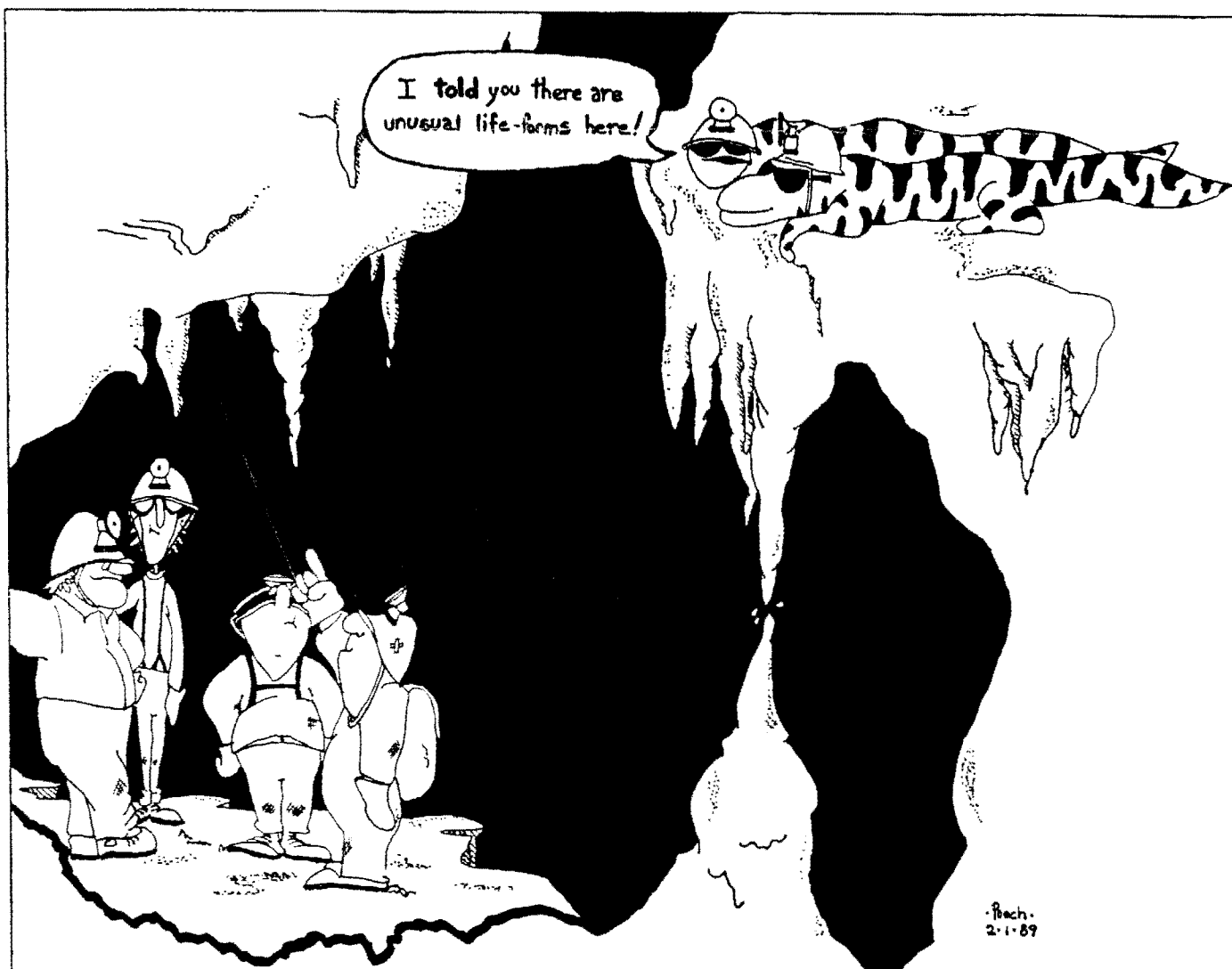
In the "Junction Room" we gathered for the first time so we could "see" total darkness. I'd love to describe it, but I couldn't see a thing. About another hour's worth of walking, stooping, squatting, and crawling, led us into the "Racing Stripe Room" where we recarbided (is this a word?) and ate a little, though most of us were still stuffed from our "beans-for-dinner-last-night".

After flossing, re-duct taping, and recarbidization (that's got to be a word), I collected volunteers for the water passage exit. But only three were foolish ... er ... un ... brave enough to try this portion of the cave with me: Terry Ward, M.T., and Harold. Despite Dale's warning us that we would miss out on a suprise awaiting us at the other exit, we headed for the lower, wetter portions of the cave.

Entering Mr. Catfish's environment, we agreed that the water temperature wasn't too cold at this point. But after reaching the first "WOW" zone, I think we experienced some bad air. There must have been an abundance of helium in the cave because we all seemed to be talking three octaves higher. The water level was only belly button deep, but ceiling height, slippery rocks and a numb feeling from the neck down, caused some of us to get a little wetter than we should have. As time passed it was necessary to crawl on top of breakdown periodically and make sure your lower half was still with you. Conversation seemed to slow down so much you could hear teeth chattering and even the skin wrinkling and shrinking around you. Boy, just when I thought I was gonna have a mutiny on my hands, a dim light shown in front of us.

It was probably about then that the furry Scottish Bagpipes began waking up and greeting our fellow cavers in the drier, warmer chambers, escorting them to the "surprise" at their exit. The surprise at our exit was that we made it out of the cave without a death due to hypothermia. Terry demonstrated her mountain climbing skills on the cliffs below our campsite, and we were dry and comfortable around a fire in minutes.

If Dale was gonna keep everything "right on schedule" he'd better show up soon. The fire was going out, and about the only thing burning was someone's B.V.D.'s that had fallen into the flames. We had binoculars out scanning the road and spotted 'em waiking toward us ... and it looked like they were kind enough to bring the "surprise" back to camp to show us! I was gonna try and tell them what a fun-filled experience they had missed in the water passage, but it wouldn't have been very convincing watching us huddled around the burning B.V.D.'s and sniffing an empty champagne bottle (surprise!). In any case, this was a great trip and we left at 4 PM ... Mountain Time ... Right on schedule.



DESTINATION: Colorado Bend State Park

TRIP DATE: January 13-15, 1989

REPORTED BY: Butch Fralis

TRIP LEADER: Butch Fralis

PERSONNEL:	Dawn Burow	Butch Fralis	Jennifer Fralis
	Sheila Hartman	Keith Heusa	Alvia Hill
	Wayne Hill	Terry Holsinger	David McClung
	Stephanie Stewart	Quinta Wilkinson	

The threat of bad weather resulted in a low turn out of cavers for the January work trip. Eleven people arrived and a reasonable amount was accomplished. Cavers awakened Saturday morning to cool weather and the general consensus was the best place to be was underground where the temperature remains the same year round. Due to the cold air, this time of year, it's the best time to explore caves known to have bad air. The cooler ground air with respect to warm cave air, cause the caves to circulate and for a short time they can be explored without difficulty.

Terry Holsinger, Dave McClung and Sheila Hartman set out to survey in Gorman Creek Crevice (SAB 183), located in the Lively pasture. They spent approximately 9 hours in the cave and managed to survey 210 feet. They left a gap of approximately 150 feet between the last survey point and where they began their survey. This added to the previous surveyed length of 625 feet, brings the cave length up to approximately 985 feet. At this time this makes Gorman Creek Crevice the third longest cave in San Saba County behind Clark's Branch Well on the adjoining Yates Ranch. Gorman Cave, of course, is the longest cave in the county. Surveying and push trips into Gorman Creek Crevice take a great deal of time due to nearly all passage being crawly. To reach their first survey point the cavers crawled on hands and knees for approximately 350 feet and then down to belly crawl through 275 feet of bedding plane crawl space.

In the area where the survey was started, the passage changes from the low flat bedding plane to a respectable hands and knees passage. At various points, the cave intersects tall fissures (with no surface openings) and for short distances, walking passage with ceilings heights of approximately 20 feet are observed. They surveyed until a junction was reached. From the original push trip, it's known that the left hand passage ends after a few hundred feet while the right hand passage continues to the point where the bad air was encountered but without an end in sight.

Cavers expect Gorman Creek Crevice will extend to Carlsbad Cavern by way of Fitton Cave in Arkansas but since it's mostly bedding plane crawl, no one will care. A bedding plane crawl is a cave formed horizontally between two layers of rock. As water moves between these layers, rock is removed to form cave passage. Bedding plane passage as in the case of San Saba County, caves exemplified by Gorman Creek Crevice, is often very wide yet ceiling heights are very low. The bedding plane passage in Gorman Creek crevice ranges from 2 to 15 inches in height and up to 30 feet across.

While surveying, the team was also checking airflow in the cave. On a push trip into the cave last year, there was air flowing in the cave during the first 600 feet of traverse but ended in a fissure unnotice by that team who later had to turn back when they encountered bad air. On a later trip, while cleaning nearby Horseshoe Chimney (SAB 182), several trash bags were removed exposing a passage which had been completely sealed by the bags. Air immediately began to blow from this passage. Cavers have theorized that Horseshoe and Gorman Creek Crevice are somehow connected and hoped the bad air would be circulated out. One bit of evidence which leads to this supposition is that all through the explored extent of Gorman Creek Crevice, pieces of garbage are strewn about on the floor. Horseshoe crevice of course, is full of garbage. One other cave in the area filled with garbage is Space Heater Cave (SAB 203), but it's approximately one mile away and the garbage is of a much earlier vintage than that found in Horseshoe. On this trip, the team observed air flow through a fissure which had been missed on the first push trip and they were also in for another surprise. Air was entering the main entrance, exiting through this fissure but also moving into the unexplored passage of the cave.

Dawn Burow, Keith Heusa, Alvia and Wayne Hill set out for another part of the Lively pasture to survey Sore Toe Cave (SAB 179). This cave had been entered on a previous trip, but could not be completely explored due to air quality problems. They rappelled approximately 20 feet into the vertical entrance only to find a second drop of approximately 30 feet leading to another level. They rappelled the second drop and found a small amount of horizontal passage. On this trip, the air quality was good allowing them to push and survey the entire extent of the cave.

After completing Sore Toe Cave, they were joined by Butch Fralis and went to Crippled Deer Cave (SAB 201), named after a deer which was freed from the nearby fence at the time of discovery. On a previous trip, it too had repelled intrepid explorers due to air quality problems. The entrance to this cave is very small and requires a great deal of agility to enter. Alvia entered, then Dawn, followed by Keith then Wayne. About the time Butch was to attempt entry, Wayne called up that Alvia had found the end of the cave and every one was on their way out. This cave wasn't surveyed but the air quality was good.

While they were in the area, they decided to locate SAB 194 which has not been explored, on the way to this cave, two karst features were noted and checked out. One had been flagged on the infamous February ridge walk of the Lively pasture which located 26 caves or Karst features. During the surface survey of this 720 acre pasture, several of the caves could not be located. One of these was flagged indicating it to be one of the missing caves. This one was checked out but was dirt choked after only a few feet. The next feature, had been missed on previous trips but turned out to be a rock bed approximately 100 feet across and 12 feet thick which is heavily fractured. One area offers hope of passage into the bed rock but would require heavy rocks to be moved before entry. This brings the count in the Lively pasture up to 35 caves or significant Karst features.

The team proceeded on to locate SAB 194 but instead located a young deer with it's hind hoof hung up in the fence. The deer, a young whitetailed buck with it's horns just budding out, had one hour caught in the top two strands of barbed wire. It was rescued but appeared to have been trapped for several days hanging from one leg with most of it's body weight supported by it's neck. It didn't appear to be severely injured all things considered. It was coaxed into drinking. The animal was to weak to get to water so transportation to the water trough was furnished. Unfortunately the animal died on the way. Park Superintendent Jesse Terin and Ranger Steve Dinesora later stated that deer usually die almost immediately when freed after only a few hours. By the time the rescue attempt was terminated, it was getting dark so the cavers returned to camp.

Butch and Jennifer Fralis, Stephanie Stewart, and Quinta Wilkinson began Saturday morning ridge walking north east of Sab 189 & 190 and due east of SAB 206. This area has five known caves, one potential dig and a cava which hasn't been relocated, known as Danny's Carlsbad Connection. They spent approximately four hours in this area but failed to discover or rediscover anything other than a few insignificant Karst features. After some time, they went to the Lively pasture to check on the others. It was at this time Butch joined the other group (as mentioned above). While the ladies returned to camp to cook stew for supper.

Sunday morning saw activity begin anew. Sheila Hartman and Quinta Wilkinson removed and bagged the garbage filling a small sink located on the trail from the park road to the camp near Blue Ribbon Pit (SAB 184). After cleaning, obvious passage wasn't opened but could do so after a heavy rain.

Keith Heusa, Wayne Hill, Terry Holsinger and David McClung began surface survey at a bench mark established near the camp. They tied in Blue Ribbon Pit then Turtle Shell Cave (SAB 108) into the surface survey. The extent of the survey was about 2000 feet.

A word here about surface survey at Colorado Bend. The instruments used are the same as used in cave survey. They are hand held instruments owned by the cavers themselves. Distance measurements between survey points are made with either a 100 foot or 200 foot tape. The survey closures have been surprising accurate when the quality of the equipment is compared to professional survey instruments. Of course it must be considered that surveying in the brush offers little hope of getting the long shots where the professional instruments are best suited. To survey 2000 feet, may require as many as 70 shots due to working around trees, brush etc.

Butch Fralis and Alvia Hill set out to the area where Butch had ridgewalked the day before. Armed with vertical equipment and the air quality meter, they went to SAB 211 (unnamed) to see if it was enterable. Butch, Keith and Quinta had entered the cave on a previous trip and discovered a drop of approximately 20 feet into a stream passage. The air quality was 16.5% oxygen at the top of the drop. Alvia and Butch discovered this weekend, the air quality was an astounding 20.5% in the stream passage allowing exploration until they were stopped by time limitations.

All in all, it was a successful weekend the potential bad weather didn't materialize and it was beautiful. No new caves were discovered but projects thwarted on earlier trips due to poor air quality was accomplished and Gorman Creek Crevice became the third longest cave in the county. Future trips will see Gorman Creek Crevice become the second longest cave in San Saba County. SAB 211 will be surveyed and ridgewalking will resume. At this time, approximately 60% of the Lemona Ranch area has been ridgewalked but no matter how thoroughly it appears to have been covered, new caves appear all the time. Keith Heusa is working on a new overlay for the TPWB Topo., to show the known cave locations but it will be a long while before this map can be brought up to date and remain that way for any length of time.

Colorado Bend State Park, January 13-15, 1989

(Unnamed Cave) San Saba County (SAB 211)

Owner: State of Texas (Parks & Wildlife Department)

Length: 150'

Depth: 53'

Location: Bend 7.5' Quadrangle
Colorado Bend State Park

SAB 211 is entered through a sink approximately 3 feet wide and 10 feet long. Entry through a hole two feet in diameter leads down approximately eight feet into a room with some formations. Bat guano on the floor of this room indicates bats have sometimes used this cave for temporary shelter. The floor of the room slopes down until it's approximately 15 feet below the surface. To the left of the room (viewed from the entrance) is a drop of 8 feet to a shelf followed by another drop of approximately 20 feet to reach a stream passage. The drops are climbable but the last drop should be bypassed for safety. The stream bed below the drop is approximately 43 feet below the surface. The stream bed has passage running north and south. Following the down stream passage to the north, it drops approximately 4 feet and some 40 feet of hands and knees crawl, another drop is encountered. This drop is approximately 10 feet deep with passage again leading off to the north. After approximately 10 feet, the passage constricts due to mud blockage but larger passage continuing on can be seen past the blockage. To the south, the passage is the traditional San Saba bedding plane crawl. After leaving a rooey hands and knees room approximately 12 feet by 10 feet, the passage drops to approximately 1 foot ceilings by about 20 feet wide. In another 20 feet, passage remains wide but once again can traverse on hands and knees. The passage to the south was explored for approximately 100 feet, it continued on as hands and knees as far as could be seen but also the exploration was discontinued due to time limitations. Air quality never dropped below 20.5% during this visit. Trips during the late fall have seen air quality drop to 16.5% approximately 20 feet below the surface. Future trips will see this cave surveyed and pushed to it's traversable end.

TSA WINTER MEETING
POWELL'S CAVE
by Butch Fralia

Through the magnificent efforts of George Veni, 74 cavers were able to explore and survey Powell's Cave in Menard, Texas over the weekend of January 27-29, 1989. Powell's Cave, which up to recently has been considered the longest cave in Texas (moved to #2 position by Honey Creek), has been closed to cavers for about six years due to land owner relations. George Veni, supercaver, and smooth talker, persuaded the owner to allow the site to be used for the Texas Speleological Association winter meeting and work project.

Throughout Friday night, cavers arrived in droves for the occasion. Familiar faces were in abundance, Doug Allen (TSA Vice-Chairman), Deborah Brown, Chuck Cluck and Susan Penney, Don Denton (Maverick Grotto - president NTSS), Dr. Bill Elliot (TSS, TCMA), Terry Holsinger, Joe Ivey (Chairman TSA & TCMA), Carl Ponebchek and his daughter Jo Anne, Jay Jorden (Chairman - DFW), Linda Palit (TSA Secretary), and a host of others. It was like old times which brought the beginning of new times.

Saturday morning cavers gathered at the headquarters to organize into survey teams to begin the resurvey of Powell's Cave Texas with 14.2 miles of surveyed passage. Much of the original survey data is missing and the extent of the cave can no longer be proven. There are questions of how the length was calculated and there are over two hundred leads on the original map which weren't surveyed. Other than it's mostly crawlway, it seems only fitting that it should be resurveyed to resume it's rightful place in history, at least it's mostly dry. The map of the cave is magnificent, when first seen, it looks as though someone has sketched a waffle to some large scale. The cave is blessed with a tremendous amount of maze passage, it's quite impressive. A project is now working to resurvey the cave, Terry Holtzinger will coordinate the survey effort and consolidate data to be placed in the University of Texas Main Frame for data reduction and the eventual remap using a package called ellipse. George Veni will coordinate land owner relations and file reports.

The team of Butch Fralia, Danny Sherrod and Quinta Wilkinson were assigned to survey the East Broadway section. Butch ran instruments, Danny lead tape and Quinta sketched. They were assigned this section in deference to Butch's 200 foot survey tape. The map showed a mini-maze near the entrance that have several long passages leading off. It appeared that a long tape would make quick work of these and offer plenty of time to push several unsurveyed leads. The survey began near the entrance in a mini-maze section. The floor of the maze is covered with bat-guano and is a comfortable hands and knees crawl. Part of this was surveyed, a break outside the cave for carbide repairs and back at it. The mini-maze was completely surveyed, several leads checked out (several left for later) and one of the long passages began. After 124 feet of the long passage, it was decided that it would make a good project for later. After 7-1/2 hours in the cave, surveying 1000 feet of passage with ceilings 10-12 inches high didn't seem feasible.

After leaving the cave, it was discovered that Carl Ponebchek had prepared great amounts of split pea soup, home-made chili, huge pots of coffee (spiked with Kalua) and Tea (spiked with Amaretta). Although everyone had come prepared to cook, few did and no one turned Carl down. It was delicious.

For those who've never met Carl, he's one of the elder statesmen of Texas caving. At 65 he's blessed with great wisdom, compassion and still gets into caves and enjoys ridge-walking.

Sunday Morning, survey footage was added up, the Fralia, Sherrod, Wilkinson team had turned in a respectable 1135' of survey. The total survey for the weekend was over 3000 meters. A good start considering the passage was mostly crawl space.

The Winter meeting was brought to order by Joe Ivey and things really began to happen.

Deborah Brown, of San Antonio, has been assigned to act as assistant editor to both Jay Jordan and Dale Pate, to attempt to get more articles for the "Texas Caver" (yes, David, even a statewide publication has trouble getting material). The TSA members would prefer to see more articles by cavers as opposed to so many "staff reports."

The TSA Spring Convention will be held the last weekend in April at Luchenbach, Texas. There aren't any caves on the agenda now but perhaps by then who knows.

The weekend ended with everyone heading back to Austin, Dallas, Fort Worth, Houston, Wichita Falls, and other far away places. It was a great weekend with good accomplishments both within the cave and at the meeting.