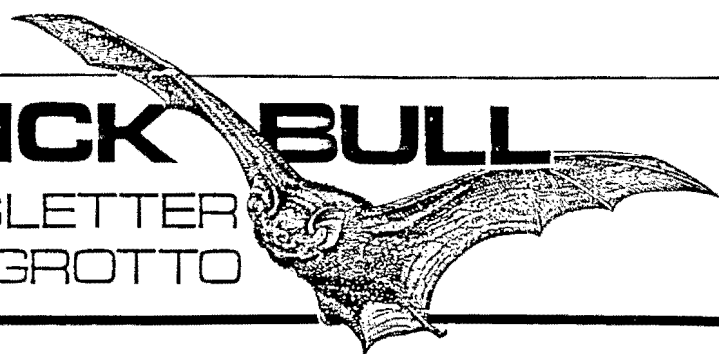


# THE MAVERICK BULL

THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER  
OF THE MAVERICK GROTTTO



VOLUME 4 NUMBER 3

MARCH 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 cyline) 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.

Chairman: Dale Ellison  
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Editor/  
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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.
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, TWP, ACMA. To be held in New Braunfels, Texas.

### ON THE COVER

Our cover caver this month is Donna Anderson. She is on rope at the vertical entrance to Sand Cave on McKittrick Hill in the Guadalupe Mountains of New Mexico.

MINUTES OF THE FEBRUARY GROTTO MEETINGNEW CAVE ON MCKITTRICK HILL

Chairman Dale Ellison called the meeting to order at the usual place, Smokey's Ribs on 14 February 1989. Several grotto members discussed recent trips to Colorado Bend State Park, to the Powell's Cave TSA work trip, and to River Styx. Dale reported that he has been watching a catfish washed into Styx about 18 months ago. It is trapped in a pool deep within the cave, and apparently thriving on detritus washed in from aboveground.

Butch Fralia gave a report on the status of bills before the Texas legislature. The Groundwater Protection Act, H.B. 533 is now pending in the House Environmental Affairs Committee, and action is expected soon. But the Cavern Protection Act appears dead for this session.

An announcement was made that Mrs. Mongrain, the owner of the Bateman Ranch (River Styx Cave) was hospitalized in Wichita Falls with bronchitis. Several members had sent her flowers and a get-well-card, and a collection was taken up at the meeting to help defray their costs.

Russell Hill showed up with the beginnings of the new Maverick Grotto Library. So far, most of the donations are his own. Bring your own donations to the next meeting and help the library grow. Russell says he will bring the entire library to each monthly meeting he is able to attend.

Two new members were elected to grotto membership: Jean Might and Dave Milhollin. They had both been at the Colorado Bend State Park work trip the previous weekend.

Since Bruce Anderson fell ill and couldn't make it to the meeting, Russell Hill filled it and gave a lively slide show and presentation.

CAVING CUISINE

By David and Shari Finrock

Do to a lack of material sent in for the newsletter this month, we are offering another suggestion for a hot apres-cave meal. If you have any other recipes, please send them in!

Hamburger Chili

Brown one pound of hamburger or ground turkey. Spoon off grease. Stir in one can of Campbell's Chili Beef Soup (available at Winn Dixie), one can of Ranch Style Beans, one can of stewed tomatoes, and one cup of water. Season with chili powder or peppers. Simmer until well heated. Top with grated cheese.

Even though this is not a cook-all-day five-alarm recipe, it really is pretty good. It's even better after a hard day of caving and takes about 20 minutes. If you have any better ideas, WHERE ARE THEY?

Through our exchange of newsletters, we have learned of a major new discovery on McKittrick Hill near Carlsbad, New Mexico. The following is taken from a report by Pat Helton in the Lubbock Area Grotto News.

The history of the new cave began on a dig at the McKittrick Hill Regional in 1987. Digging continued intermittently over several months, and finally a breakthrough occurred in April 1988. But due to the sensitive nature of the new discovery, it was kept secret until the cave could be gated. Algerita Blossom Cave was officially announced and presented to the public at the Southwestern Regional Winter Technical on 3 December 1988.

Already nearly 5000 feet of passage has been surveyed, with a number of leads waiting to be pushed. And the virgin nature of the cave and the quantity of delicate formations makes cave conservation a real priority.

Algerita Blossom begins with the newly dug crawliway in the hillside, opening into the main passage with (quoting Pat Helton) "floor to ceiling soda straws less than 1/4" in diameter, gleaming stalagmites and stalactites, fragile bacon rind less than 1/8" thick, and multi-colored drapery filling the passages. The cave floor in many places is covered wall to wall with rimstone dams forming pools throughout the cave. At one point we came upon a large bed of cave pearls... As awe-inspiring as these features were, the best was yet to come. Entering a room called "Shangri-La" we had to stop for a while and take it all in. No one knew what to say. An area of gleaming white rimstone features terraced up to a height of approximately 12 feet. The pools formed by the dams reflected the mineral colors of black, light blue, shades of grey, and pure white. The terraces led up to a black cone shaped like a volcano."

With the exception of the first room, the entire cave is alive, with water dripping everywhere. The walls and floors are still mud-free, and every effort is being made to keep it that way, with all travel in the cave being conducted in single file. Travel is very slow and tiring due to the numerous low crawlways (average height is 4 to 6 feet, but crawling is necessary to avoid breaking the numerous and fragile soda straws and stalactites.) So far, none of the delicate formations have been broken, and good cave conservation practices will attempt to keep it that way. Much of the crawling is done over razor-sharp rimstone dams, and an extra set of kneepads is a good idea for anyone attempting Algerita Blossom Cave.

If you are seriously interested in exploring and surveying in this major new discovery on McKittrick Hill, contact Pat Helton at 3517 77th Drive, Lubbock, TX 79423 (806) 796-0973.

IT DON'T GET NO BETTER THAN THIS: PART TWO  
 "BLIZZARD BREATH", A VERY APPROPRIATE TITLE  
 By Mark Porter

Date: 26-30 December 1988  
 Location: South Central Missouri  
 Personnel: Bruce Anderson, Donna Anderson, Dawn Burrow,  
 Dale Ellison, Arlene Heintz, Mark Porter,  
 Dennis Thompson & friend

Dale finally returned, we loaded up and headed back toward the campsite. This became an adventure in itself. By this time the snow had picked up again and was in high gear. Driving down those winding and hilly roads, with visibility less than an eighth of a mile, made it a challenge to get back. We averaged 10 to 15 mph on the drive back. Dale decided to stop and put his vehicle into four-wheel-drive. Pulling back onto the road, we got sideways into both lanes, and it took a bit of manouevring to get back straight... all the while waiting for oncoming traffic to plow into us broadside. Fortunately we made it back to the park safely.

Pulling in, we noticed that Dawn's new dome tent had collapsed due to the weight of the snow! She shoveled snow off it and it sprang back into its normal shape. The time was about 5 PM, it was getting dark, with temperatures in the 20's and the snow finally tapering off. Dawn and I were the only ones who had tents. Because of the weather, Dale offered, and we hurriedly accepted an offer to share his tent trailer.

While moving supplies from my tent to the trailer, I noticed a strange activity taking place on the other side of camp. Bruce had brought a breeding pair of his Malamutes. With the female in heat, the time was right, so Bruce had the female leashed while the male made the conquest. With six inches of snow on the ground, and bitterly cold, it seemed that only two of the threesome were having an enjoyable time. (See Figure 1).

That night was extremely cold. Inside the tent trailer we had a lantern, heater, and two-burner stove going, just to keep warm. Somehow we managed to survive the night.

The next morning dawned clear and cold. The roads were not in the best of shape for travel, so we proceeded to check out a couple of leads in the park that the ranger had given us. We checked out a few small holes up on the side of a bluff but they turned out to be only small dens. This activity consumed the better part of the afternoon.

The following day the roads had cleared so we headed for the Springfield area. Our destinations were two caves north of the city. One was called Low Water Cave, and the other's name was unknown.

The Unknown Cave was located a mile's hike from the road alongside a river. The entrance was large, with a spring gushing out the cave's mouth. Thirty yards back, there was a sink entrance. The passage branched, the righthand passage leading through a stoop-waik to a large room. Two leads ventured from this area. Both leads were relatively short, but had substantial formations. The left passage went for 50 yards to where the stream was picked up. There were no volunteers to explore this chilly passage further.

Hiking back, we stopped by Low Water Cave. This cave was named for its location next to a low water bridge. The cave consisted mainly of stream passage. At first I was not too receptive to this idea, but it turned out to be warmer wading through knee-high water than waiting outside! The passage was narrow, but about 15 feet high, and it extended for some 2000 feet. In addition, there was an upper passage with large flowstones and stalagmites, as well as a good quantity of mud. We exited the cave around 9 PM, wet and freezing. A person can take only so much fun, so after a hot dinner in Springfield, the troop disbanded; some hardy cavers headed back to camp one last night, and other more sensible ones to a hot shower and a warm motel bed. But the next morning, we all headed back to Texas for the comforts of home.

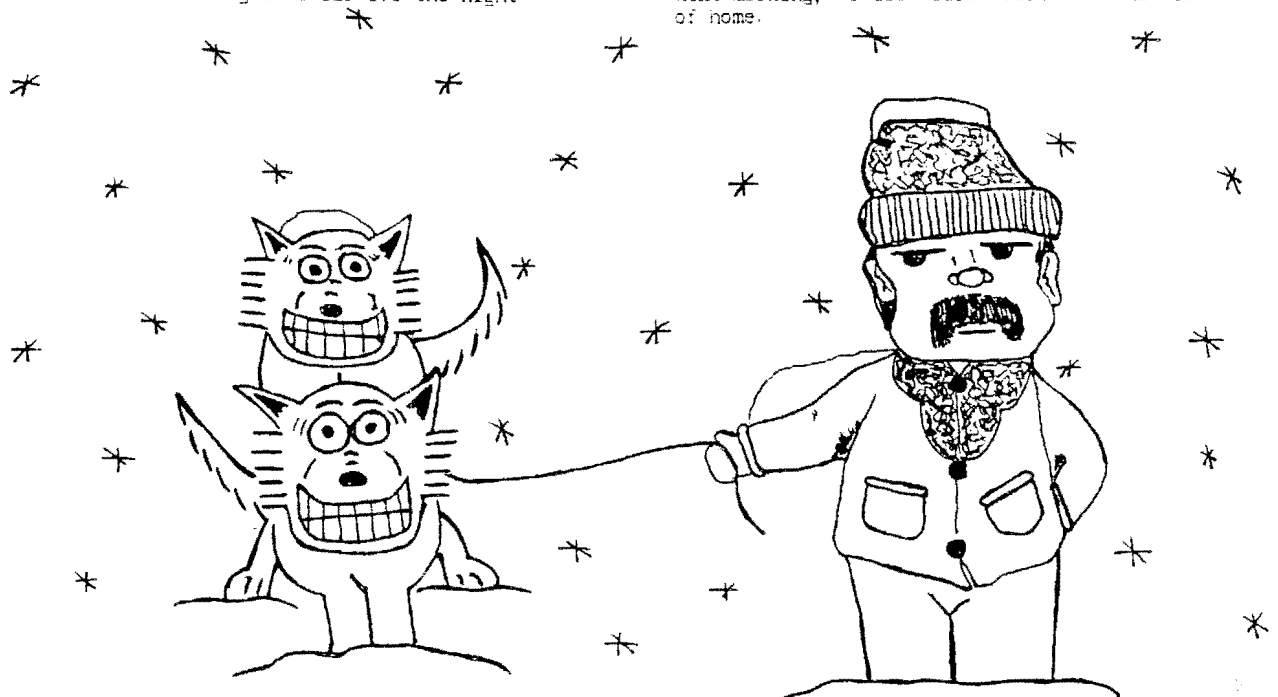


Figure 1

CURRENT MEMBERSHIP LIST

The following is a list of all the PAID-UP members of the Maverick Grotto. Many of you reading this will notice that your name is not listed. That's because you haven't paid your dues for 1989. According to our constitution and by-laws, all dues should be paid by March 1st.

If you haven't paid yet, have \$10.00 cash or check payable to the Maverick Grotto at the March 14th meeting, or send it to the treasurer, Teresa White, at 5424 Finian, North Richland Hills, TX 76126. If you don't pay during March, this is the last newsletter you will be receiving.

We will update the membership list, with phone numbers, in the April newsletter.

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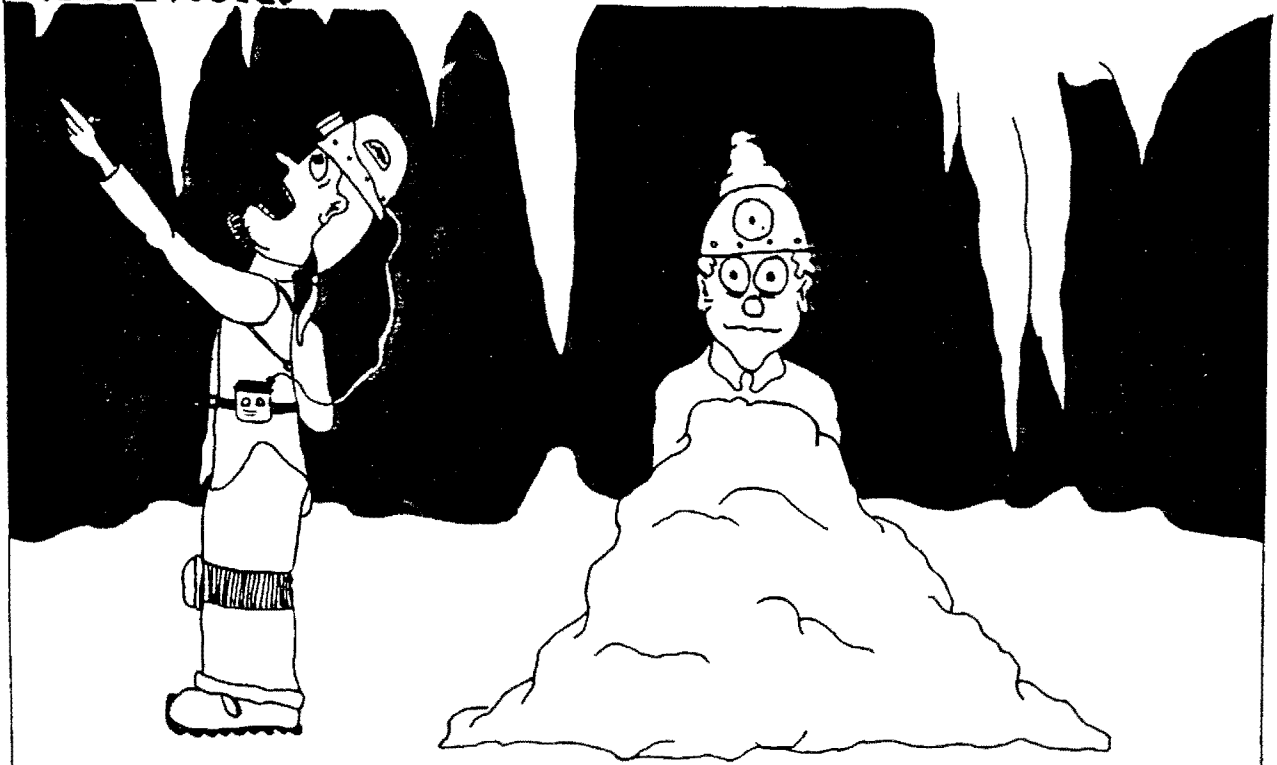
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FORT WORTH, TX 76133

CAVETOONS



"Whoa Jim Bob, That huge bat almost got me that time."

