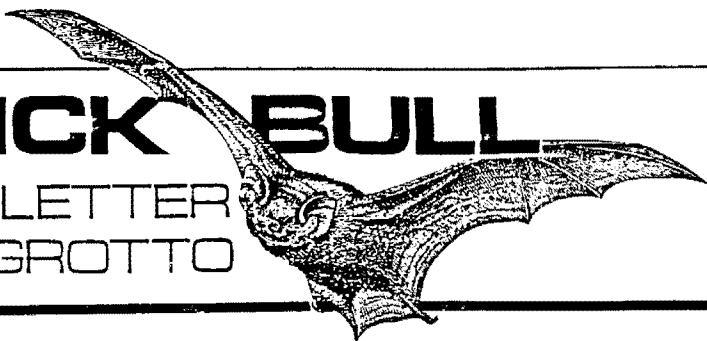


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# THE MAVERICK BULL

THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER  
OF THE MAVERICK GROTTTO

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VOLUME 4    NUMBER 5

MAY 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 512-666-0234

#### CALENDAR

Ongoing	Monthly work trip to Colorado Bend State Park. Weekend of the second Saturday of each month.
May 6-7	Trip to Turner Falls area. Contact Dale Ellison for details.
May 9	Maverick Grotto Meeting.
May 12-14	Colorado Bend State Park work Trip.
June 2	Deadline for submitting articles for the June newsletter.
June 2-4	Maverick Grotto Summer Party at M&W Ranch near Glen Rose.
June 9-10	Colorado Bend State Park Work Trip.
June 13	Maverick Grotto Meeting.
July 1	Deadline for submitting articles for the July newsletter.
July 7-9	Colorado Bend State Park Work Trip.
July 11	Maverick Grotto Meeting.
July 31-August 4	NSS Convention at Sewanee, Tennessee.
August 8	Maverick Grotto Meeting.
August 11-13	Colorado Bend State Park Work Trip.
October 3-7	National Cave Management Symposium, sponsored by TSA, TWP, ACMA. To be held in New Braunfels, Texas.

#### ON THE COVER

Our cover caver this month is our chairman, Dale Ellison. He is shown here in Wild Woman Cave in the Arbuckles in southern Oklahoma.

MINUTES OF THE APRIL MEETING

The regular monthly meeting of the Maverick Grotto was held on 11 April 1989 at Smokey's Ribs restaurant.

Chairman Dale Ellison opened the meeting and asked for any trip reports.

Butch Fralia and David Finrock gave accounts of the recent work trip to the new Devil's River State Natural Area near Del Rio. There's a full trip report later in this issue.

Butch also related some of the happenings at the April 1 TSA cleanup at the Longhorn Caverns State Park. A lot of people showed up and a lot of garbage was hauled out. Maybe there will be a trip report in next month's newsletter. (That's a gentle hint from your editors).

Russell Hill told about his unique trip this spring, when he went cave-diving with alligators (actually caimans, a close relative of the gator). Russell was on a trip to Tamaulipas, Mexico. And in addition to some good, new diving, he discovered a new dive shop in Ciudad Victoria where you can get your tanks refilled. Ask Russell about it.

At the last Colorado Bend work trip, the survey of Gorman Creek Crevasse was extended 331 feet. It now has a total length of 1558 feet surveyed, with several hundred feet more known, but as yet unsurveyed. At the back of the main passage, a pair of vertical drops was found, but there was no vertical gear, so the drop will have to wait till the May or June trip. Terry Holzinger brought a line-plot map of the cave, and it really whets the appetite.

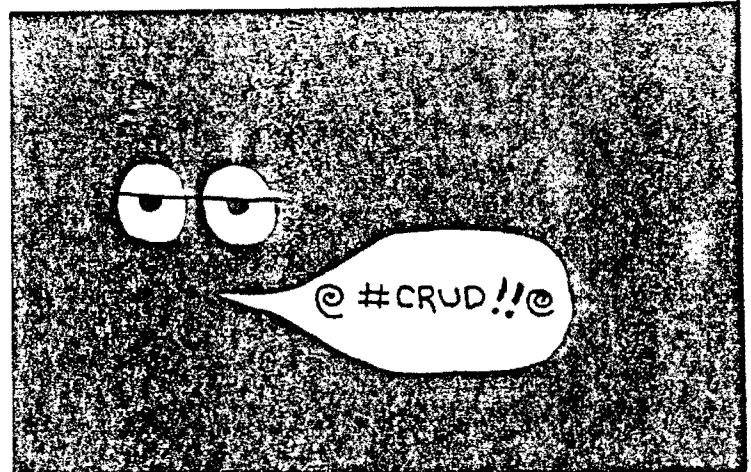
Teresa White gave a treasurer's report indicating a balance of \$616.91. That nice balance is due largely to the fact that Steve and Pat Gentry are continuing to print our newsletter each month, free of charge to the Grotto.

Bruce Anderson made a motion, which was approved by the membership, to clear up an item not addressed in our by-laws: now any former member of the Grotto whose membership has lapsed for non-payment of dues, can be re-instated simply by paying the required dues; the minimum three-trip requirement for new members will not have to be met again.

A Maverick Grotto party is planned for early June. Details are available elsewhere in the newsletter.

The business part of the meeting was adjourned, and an NSS slide program on Scott Hollow Cave in West Virginia was shown, with narration by Butch Fralia.

CAVE-TOONS



Pat

CAVER BOB REALIZES HIS MISTAKE WHEN HIS 3 LIGHT SOURCES ARE A FLINTLESS CARBIDE LAMP (THAT JUST BLEW OUT) AND 2 WET MATCHES

WELL, THEY DID THE "M" WORD!  
By Dale Ellison

Date: March 25, 1989  
Location: Hardrock Cave, Oklahoma  
Personnel: Miles Cleveland, Dale Ellison, Danny Irons

We Three Musketeers headed the new/old Scout north to Hardrock Cave. Arrangements had been made to meet the wedding party at Hardrock instead of at Dennis' house in Hennepin, Oklahoma.

Danny, a virgin caver and fellow WTI student was at first sceptical when I asked him if he would like to attend a wedding in Oklahoma, ... in a cave. Miles, the only black caver that I'm aware of, reassured Danny that all was really on the up and up. (This was Miles' third cave trip toward membership in the Maverick Grotto).

We three geared up and had a nice easy trip to the sump where the event was to take place. A couple of "pips" were spotted, which seemed the right time to explain to Danny the correlation of bats to Dracula. Clay patterns on the cave walls were explained, as were the scallop formations.

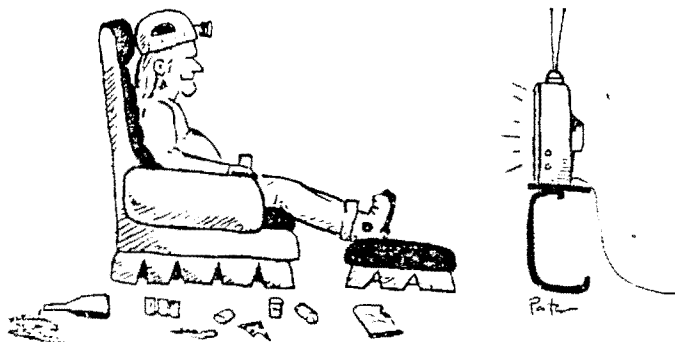
After a couple of hours waiting at the entrance for the wedding party to arrive, a loud gun-shot rang out. We three began to sing out like hounds baying at the moon. We wanted our presence to be known to avoid attracting any stray lead. Shortly thereafter, about two dozen people crested the hill.

The procession, of all sizes and genders, snaked down the hill. A hasty inquiry about the discouraging gun-shot revealed the actions of one key member of the wedding. It was the Hennepin, Oklahoma preacher, the one with the .41 revolver stuck down his pants! With that Arbuckle "boom", one Oklahoma rattlesnake was delivered from earthly bondage and sent to heaven. Dennis had caught the serpent just earlier to show everyone close-up the rattles.

The event went on without a hitch, at the first sump. Dennis, with that grin on his face was decked out in suit and tie. The blushing bride to be, Lisa Johnson was a stunning sight in Hardrock, dressed in a lime green gown. Lit candles adorned the walls, emitting a romantic glow.

A reception followed at the Thompson's house in Hennepin. Congratulations, Lisa and Dennis and may you have numerous years of "honeymoon bliss".

CAVE-TOONS



"COUCH - CAVING"

TURNER FALLS TRIP  
THIS WEEKEND

Dale Ellison is arranging a caving, camping, swimming trip this weekend, May 6-7, to Turner Falls and vicinity. There are lots of caves in the Arbuckles ... many of them excellent for beginners. So if you have been yearning to get underground, this is your chance. Plans are still being made as to just which caves we will be visiting. But we do know that we'll be meeting and camping at the Turner Falls Park just north of Ardmore. For more information, call Dale at (817) 473-0463.

MAVERICK GROTTO SUMMER PARTY

At the last Grotto meeting it was decided to hold a party the first weekend of next month, 2-4 June 1989.

At first there were plans to hold the party at Russell Hill's place in the country. But for several reasons (there's not much water and worse, it's in a DRY county!) it was decided to hold the party at the usual place... the M&W Ranch along the Brazos River just south of Glen Rose. It was also decided to make this party serve two purposes. First, have a GOOD time, and second, build up our new Grotto library. So bring a caving book, map, magazine, or video-tape for donation to the library and have a fun weekend.

From: James Savage  
P.O. Box 748  
Hurst, TX 76053

A friend of mine is a police officer in a local burg, and when he called this police equipment company, they sent him a crate of catalogs, including one from a company that I thought you might be interested in knowing about. The name of the company is ALEXANDER BATTERIES out of Mason City, IA, and they specialize in rechargeable batteries, mainly Ni-Cad types. The catalog also shows quite a selection of sealed lead-acid batteries that look like gel-cells to me. Anyway, these guys have sales reps all over the U.S. and Canada (with phone numbers to follow), as well as in Europe. It might be worth it to contact them to get one of their catalogs and price lists to see if these guys are a good source of gel-cells and Ni-Cads. The phone numbers of some of their reps are as follows:

Southern U.S.A.  
Alexander Battery Co.  
Arlington, TX  
1-800-323-3813  
1-817-467-5434  
Jim Lewis

Central U.S.A.  
Alexander Battery Co.  
McHenry, IL  
1-800-323-3813  
1-815-344-0666  
Sue Grandt

Eastern Canada  
Kilpatrick Communica-  
tions & Controls  
Weston, Ontario, Canada  
1-800-387-5865  
Bob Kilpatrick

DEVIL'S RIVER TRIP REPORT  
By David Finfrock

Date: 16-21 March 1989  
Location: Devil's River State Natural Area  
North of Del Rio, in Val Verde Co., TX  
Personnel: Maverick Grotto members: David Finfrock,  
Shari Finfrock, Butch Fralia, Keith Heuse,  
Danny Sherrod, and Quinta Wilkinson  
Plus other cavers from Austin, San Antonio  
and Corpus Christi

Shari and I made it down the last 25 miles of gravel road west of Loma Alta and arrived at the new park headquarters area a little before sunset. And shortly afterwards Danny Sherrod pulled in as well. The others had arrived Friday evening and had already spent one day ridge-walking and ridge-driving. (Ask Butch Fralia about some of the so-called roads in the park).

Our timing was good, because we were there just in time for the communal dinner. We all prepared something and then browsed through the kitchen at the bunkhouse, sampling a little of everything. The food was one of the outstanding features of this whole trip. Some of the real treats were the freshly caught trout which Page had brought from San Antonio, and the corn-fritters and apple-fritters which Quinta made. (Maybe we'll get a recipe soon).

But even the food had to take a back seat to the HOT SHOWERS available at the bunkhouses. I could get used to that kind of "roughing it".

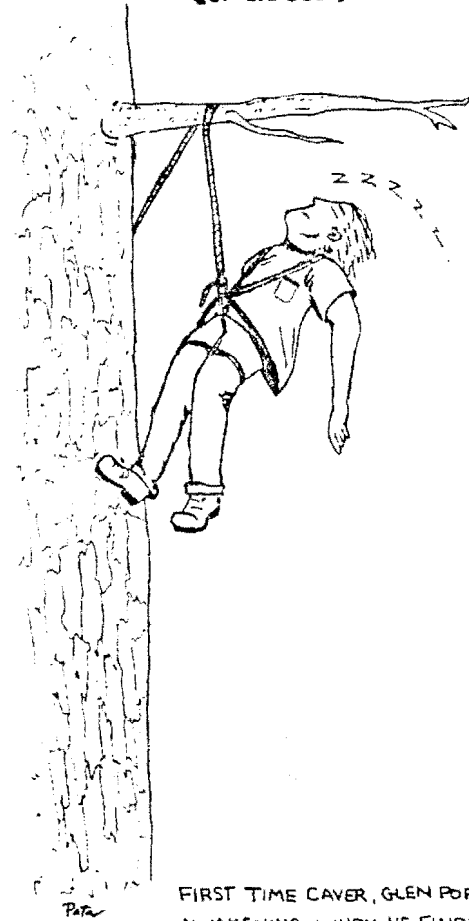
We spent Sunday driving the rough tracks advertised as roads on the topo maps. It would have been impossible without the 4-wheel drive speleo-vehicles. Then we hiked up and down canyons and over ridges, spotting any caves and/or rock shelters and plotting them on the maps. One cave near the spring in Rough Spring Canyon looked promising. It was a narrow crawlway, about 2 feet wide and 12-18 inches high. I entered and made it back about 15 feet before the ceiling lowered too much. But the floor was a soft dirt, and I tried a little digging. I made quick progress in the loose dirt, and it was obvious the cave kept going, but it was difficult because there was nowhere to put the dirt. I had to pull it all the way back to the entrance to dispose of it. There just wasn't room for me and all that dirt in that little crawlway. And all the digging raised a choking dust, that clogged nostrils and got in your eyes. Still it looked promising, so I took turns with Keith Heuse, Danny Sherrod and Henry (from San Antonio), and we dug out another 15 feet of passage in the next 3 hours. Eventually, a thunderstorm blew up and chased us out of the flood-prone canyon, and it will take another trip to see how much further it goes.

On Monday we went to the already known Fawcett's Cave. A 20-foot rappell gave us access to the entrance pit, and inside it proved to be a spectacular cave, some 1000 feet long, and most of that length is extensively decorated with stalactites, stalagmites, bacon, soda straws, and floor-to-ceiling columns, some of which were 25 feet tall and 4 feet across. It was a truly beautiful cave, though we did find some graffiti at the back, dating back to the 1930's. We conducted some surveying for the cameras (for the "Made in Texas" program on caving due to be seen on PBS later this year). And we even did a few underground interviews. It will be interesting to see how much makes it into the final edited version.

After caving for 4 or 5 hours, we drove back across the park and headed for the Devil's River and a welcome soak in the springs. But about the time we got into the water, a norther blew through, and north winds of 30-40 mph funneled down the canyon, cutting our swimming short. We found out later that we were lucky; that same front had produced sleet and snow from the panhandle to the Dallas-Fort Worth area, and as far south as Sonora, just 50 miles to our north.

Tuesday morning, Shari and I left camp after breakfast and headed south to Seminole Canyon State Park to view Indian pictographs before heading home. But other members of the group remained till the next weekend, covering even more of the park. There were not any major new caves found, but there are a lot of leads to be checked out, and a lot more ridge-walking to do. If you're interested, Keith Heuse is in charge of the Devil's River Project.

CAVE TOONS



FIRST TIME CAVER, GLEN POPE, IS IN FOR A RUDE AWAKENING WHEN HE FINDS OUT WHERE HE SET UP CAMP FOLLOWING THE FESTIVE CAVE JAMBOREE LAST NIGHT.

CAVING CUISINE  
From the Kitchen of Dale Ellison

Campfire Twist Bread

Use biscuit or pancake ready-mix flour, allowing one cup per camper. Mix into stiff dough, using less liquid (either milk or water) than usual. Press dough flat, cut in 1-inch strips, wind these spirally around clubs of green wood. Clubs should be about 2 inches in diameter and 3 1/2 feet long. Hold over a bed of coals, turning stick constantly so bread browns evenly on all sides without burning. Eat with jam, jelly or syrup.

# City Forms Lechuguilla Cave Task

By Jim O'Hearn  
Staff Writer

A Lechuguilla Cave task force has been formed for the city of Carlsbad to make recommendations on how the cave might be approached from a community level in order to find its possible impact on Carlsbad tourism.

The committee was formed by Mayor Eob Forrest to "bring together key community representatives with officials of the National Park Service in order to share information about the survey work currently under way at

Lechuguilla, and to make recommendations regarding how this important discovery should be approached from a community level."

There has been talk of designating the cave a wilderness area, which would prohibit the building of roads, buildings and other development of facilities for those visiting the cave. Last year, when two *Carlsbad Current-Argus* staff members visited the cave, they had to drive about 10 miles on a gravelled road and then walk about one mile to get to the entrance.

The cave features crystal formations growing under water, plus other wonders to the eye. It is reportedly bigger than the Carlsbad Caverns.

In November 1983, Ron Kerbo, Carlsbad Caverns National Park cave specialist, reportedly said that if the cave is ever opened to the public, that time would be a long way off, since exploration is still continuing. He also was quoted in a C-A news release as saying that, because of the rugged terrain, it would cost millions of dollars to develop the cave for public use.

It was reported that there have been moves by the National Park Service to have Lechuguilla Cave declared a wilderness.

In appointing the committee,

which is charged with reporting back to Forrest in 120 days on the future of Lechuguilla, Forrest said, "I believe one of the most important decisions in the future of our city is in what direction we, as citizens, want to see the Lechuguilla Cave developed.

"As you may realize, this will be quite a difficult task, but I feel like with the wide representation of the committee that you will be able to collectively come up with a solution."

Appointed to the committee are Kerbo; Mayor Pro Tem Gary Perkowski; city councilman A.E. Jackson; Mike Currier of Guaranty Title; Mike Hood, operations manager for General Telephone; Nancy Brantley, Eddy County commissioner; Joe Florez; Dodie Oden of Western Commerce Bank; Stasia Spurrier; Perry Denton of Denton Funeral Home; and educator Jed Howard.

## Force

The above article appeared in the "Carlsbad Current - Argus" on 7 March 1989, and was reprinted in the March - April issue of "Southwestern Cavers". Many cavers in the Carlsbad area are incensed that cavers are not better represented on the Mayor's committee. Ron Kerbo is the only active caver included, and of course his first duty is to represent the National Park Service, not the caving community.

Cavers who want to see Lechugilla remain a wilderness and not be developed as a commercial cave, NEED TO WRITE letters to Sen. Pete Dominici, 434 Dirksen Senate Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20510. It would also be good to write to U.S. Secretary of the Interior, Manuel Lujan, as well as your own representative and senators to let them know how you feel.

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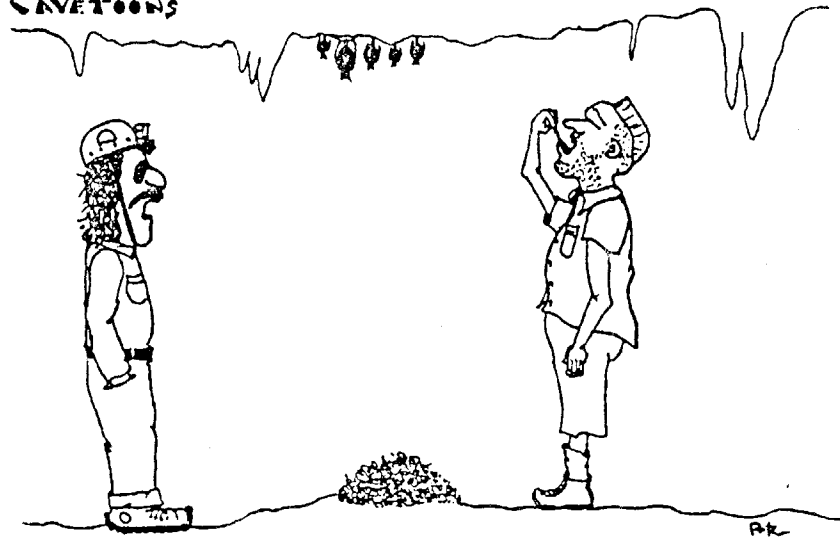
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CAVETOONS



CAVER BOB OBSERVES LOCAL MILO SLAG, TESTING A SAMPLE FROM HIS RECENTLY DISCOVERED "SKOAL MINE" IN BAT CAVE.

