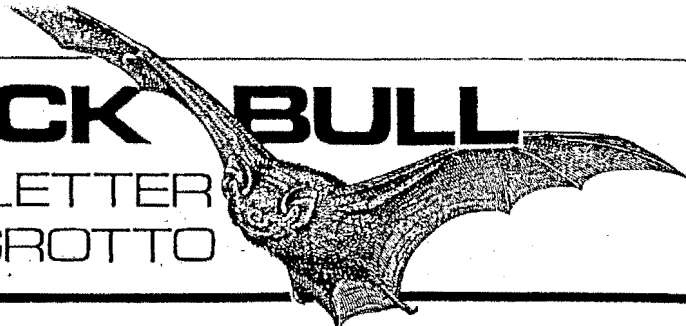


# THE MAVERICK BULL

THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER  
OF THE MAVERICK GROTTO



VOLUME 5 NUMBER 4

APRIL 1990



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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.

Chairman: Dale Ellison  
1208 Dan Gould Rd.  
Arlington, Texas 76017  
817-473-0463

Vice-Chairman: Bruce Anderson  
504 Kimbrough  
Fort Worth, Texas 76108  
817-246-6313

Treasurer: Teresa White  
5424 Finian  
North Richland Hills, TX 76180  
817-281-6240

Editor/  
Secretary: David & Shari Finfrock  
1974 Barron  
Fort Worth, TX 76112  
817-451-3539

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
April 6-8	"Rites of Spring" joint party of the Maverick and D/FW Grottoes at the M&W Ranch near Glen Rose
April 10	Maverick Grotto Meeting
April 13-15	Colorado Bend State Park Work Trip
April 21-22	Advanced Rapelling Class at the National Guard Armory in Mineral Wells
April 21-22	Earth Day --- Cleanup projects in State Parks
April 28-29	Continuation of Advanced Rapelling Class at Lake Mineral Wells State Park
May 4-6	TSA Spring Convention --- TBA
May 8	Maverick Grotto Meeting
May 12-13	Colorado Bend State Park Work Trip
June 16-23	NCRC Texas Seminar on Cave Rescue Operations and Management in Colorado Bend State Park and in the town of San Saba
July 9-13	NSS Convention at Yreka, California
Fall	2nd International Speleological Congress in Monterrey, Mexico

### ON THE COVER

Our Cover Caver this month is Wade Kennedy, exploring one of the Bower's Trail Caves. They are a group of joint-controlled sandstone caves in the Kiamichi Mountains of Pushmataha County, Oklahoma. The photo is by Woodrow Thomas, whose article on the caves appears in this newsletter.

## MINUTES OF THE MARCH MEETING

The Maverick Grotto met on Tuesday, 13 March 1990 for its regular monthly meeting. Visitors at the meeting included Steven Young and Amy Mercer.

Treasurer Teresa White reported that we have a healthy balance of \$592.28. But we also have a problem. Our bank was taken over by Comerica Bank and the new account includes a monthly service charge which we didn't have to pay before. We are now looking for a new checking account; one that has no service charge for an account that needs to write only two or three checks per month. If you know of one, contact Teresa.

Two new members were elected to the Maverick Grotto. Ellen Allen and James Patrick Blaise had completed the required three trips, and were each elected unanimously. Welcome to the Maverick Grotto!

Problems had been reported in the past with some newsletters arriving in tatters. Steve and Pat Gentry, who have been printing our newsletters free-of-charge for the past year agreed to put extra staples in the newsletter last month. And as a result there were no reported problems with the March edition.

Russell Hill discussed the computer documentation of the Grotto Library. He has now started writing out descriptions of each item and Donna Anderson has agreed to computerize the results. They hope to have the project finished sometime in 1990.

Bruce Anderson Reported that he will be bringing the grotto carbide supply to the April meeting. It is free to all grotto members who bring a container. And on a motion by Russell Hill it was decided that the carbide will be sold to interested non-members at the rate of 50 cents per pound.

David Finrock announced that a cleanup of Cascade Caverns near San Antonio would take place on 30 March - 1 April.

Jay Jorden announced the finalization of plans for the NCRC Cave Rescue Seminar in San Saba in June. More detailed information is elsewhere in this newsletter.

Butch Fralia announced a cleanup of caves at Colorado Bend State Park in conjunction with the celebration of Earth Day 1990 on the weekend of 21-22 April.

Bruce Anderson suggested that we have a joint party with the D/FW Grotto this spring. Jay Jorden concurred and promised to meet with their officers to plan the party. (Late information on the party, now scheduled for 7-8 April is in this newsletter).

Bruce also suggested that we have one joint meeting each year, and that we sponsor joint new member trips. Those suggestions are being investigated now.

Butch Fralia announced that he would be going to Austin 21 March to meet with Park & Wildlife officials on cave management in the Texas State Park system.

Ernest Parker said that after he had received several questions, he wanted to make it clear that the "Advanced" rappelling course is definitely open to beginners, too.

Dave Milhollin reported that the Second International Speleological Congress scheduled for April in Monterrey, Mexico had been postponed till the fall.

Stephanie Andrews has invited the Explorer Post at the Fort Worth Zoo to come along on the River Styx trip at the end of March.

Dave Milhollin and Dale Ellison reported on their trip to River Styx in early March. They reported spotting a Tiger salamander there.

Butch Fralia gave a report on the latest work trip to Colorado Bend State Park. Heavy rains caused a lot of flooding of creeks and caves, and made getting out of the park impossible until late Sunday night.

The video program scheduled for the meeting had to be cancelled because a rather important cable connector was missing. Fortunately, Butch Fralia saved the day. He had brought preserved specimens of Black Widow and Brown Recluse spiders and passed them around. It made for some interesting discussion.

At the April meeting, Russell Hill will be presenting a slide show on his trip last fall to the caves of Great Britain. Don't miss this one!

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 KARST FIELD STUDIES

How would you like to get college credit for caving! Sound too good to be true? Or maybe you would like to learn more about speleology without the pressure of grades. Either way you're in luck.

The Center for Cave and Karst Studies at Western Kentucky University is offering one-week seminars throughout the month of June at Mammoth Cave National Park. The courses include Karst Geology, Speleology, The Exploration of Mammoth Cave, Karst Hydrology, and Cave Survey and Cartography. All are offered with or without college credit. In addition, they offer a special course by George Veni on Karst of the Sierra Madre Orientales, Mexico. It runs from 3-12 August, beginning in San Antonio and extending up to 700 miles into Mexico.

For more information, see David Finrock at the next Maverick Grotto meeting, or contact: Dr. Nick Crawford, Center for Cave and Karst Studies, Western Kentucky University, Bowling Green, KY 42101. (502) 843-4979 or (502) 745-4555

## LIFE ON UPHILL CREEK THE EXPLORATION AND SURVEY OF THE BOWER'S TRAIL CAVES

By Woodrow Thomas

High in the Kiamichi Mountains of southeastern Oklahoma, overlooking scenic Uphill Creek, is a unique geologic area. A large section of the bedrock, which is Jack's Fork sandstone, has slumped away from the hillside forming several block-creep crevices. At least seven caves are located within several hundred feet of each other. Although most of the caves are less than 100 feet long, a combined total of 532 horizontal feet has been surveyed in three of them. There is at least a couple of hundred feet more of known passage in the others. The caves are most typically joint controlled with highly angular features and a lot of breakdown. Ceiling heights are generally in the 10 to 15 foot range, passage widths vary from 2 to 15 feet, and several spacious rooms occur. The caves are surprisingly stable. The walls are usually vertical and the ceilings are often very flat. Christ's Forty Meter Cave, named by John Brooks and inspired by a nearby church camp, is the longest and most complex of the caves. It has three levels, four entrances, two skylights, ceiling heights of over 20 feet, and a vertical relief of over 50 feet. Its surveyed horizontal length is 367 feet.

The Bower's Trail Caves are devoid of speleothems except for one instance of minor calcium carbonate deposition. There is noticeable air movement through parts of some of the caves, probably due to convection currents.

An early written reference to the caves, according to Sue Bozeman, comes from an article entitled "Myotis of Oklahoma", published by Bryan Glass in 1959. He apparently identified the bat *Myotis sodalis* there. There is no record of organized cavers having visited the area, although the caves are well known to the local residents. The caves were brought to my attention by John Brooks of the DFW Grotto, who passed on a rumor of a cave near the community of Honobia (pronounced Ho'-nub-bee). On 25 February 1989, Ken Curtis, Mark Harris and I set out for southeast Oklahoma to see the Bear Caves of Talimena Trail. On our way we stopped at a mechanic's garage in Honobia to verify the rumor. Sure enough, there was a cave nearby and so, armed with some vague directions we began the hunt. We took a turn off the main highway onto a gravel road that fit the description and parked the truck. In a scene that is familiar to most cavers, we spent an hour searching for the cave, gave up and drove off toward the Talimena Trail to the north. It was then that we found the correct turnoff, and fired up with enthusiasm we decided to abandon the Bear Caves to continue our search here. This time we followed the headwaters of Uphill Creek downstream about a half-mile, checking all the rock cliffs and overhangs. Ken and Mark noticed some large rocks high on the hillside and climbed up to investigate. I followed their calls and we found ourselves on the edge of a large collapsed area strewn with boulders the size of small houses and bordered by 20 foot cliffs, with holes everywhere!

Upon closer investigation, we discovered a central sunken area with four entrances leading from it. On that day we explored three caves and briefly looked over the surrounding area. We counted approximately 25 pipistrelle bats underground, as well as a few centipedes, and Ken found and rescued a box turtle from an entrance. We returned to Texas elated at the "discovery" of some new caves and I began making plans to return and survey our finds. Although none of them were very long, I felt that the caves were of speleological interest because of their unusual nature and the scarcity of caves in that area. It was not until September 1989 that I was able to return to Uphill Creek with a survey team. Ken Curtis and John Brooks joined me for a single-day trip to the area. We set 30 stations that afternoon and surveyed 412 feet of cave passage. While we were there three local boys showed up. They told us how they had recently gone through these caves killing all the bats they could find. (There was a noticeable shortage of pipistrelles in the caves this time). Horrified, I gave them a conservation spiel and then pried them for information on other caves in the area. They showed us two new entrances nearby and also led the way back to the road by a considerable shortcut. We thanked them and headed south.

The mapping of the Bower's Trail caves continued on 4-5 November 1989. This time Wade Kennedy and Don Metzner accompanied me for the weekend foray. We spent part of the first day touring the previously surveyed passage, and taking photos, and then added about 150 feet of survey. On Sunday we finished mapping, bringing our weekend total to 220 feet and completing the three largest caves. We spent the rest of the afternoon dropping into crevices, pushing crawlways, and generally checking out every hole we could find. We looked at the two caves shown to me by the three boys, which turned out to be 50 to 60 feet long each. We then investigated a blowing hole which we could not gain entrance to. We found two other sizeable caves nearby - a short one with a hammer lead to going passage, and a more substantial one which Don affectionately dubbed "Wade's Screaming Borehole Lead". We left that day assured that we had thoroughly covered the vicinity and had found and surveyed the longest caves.

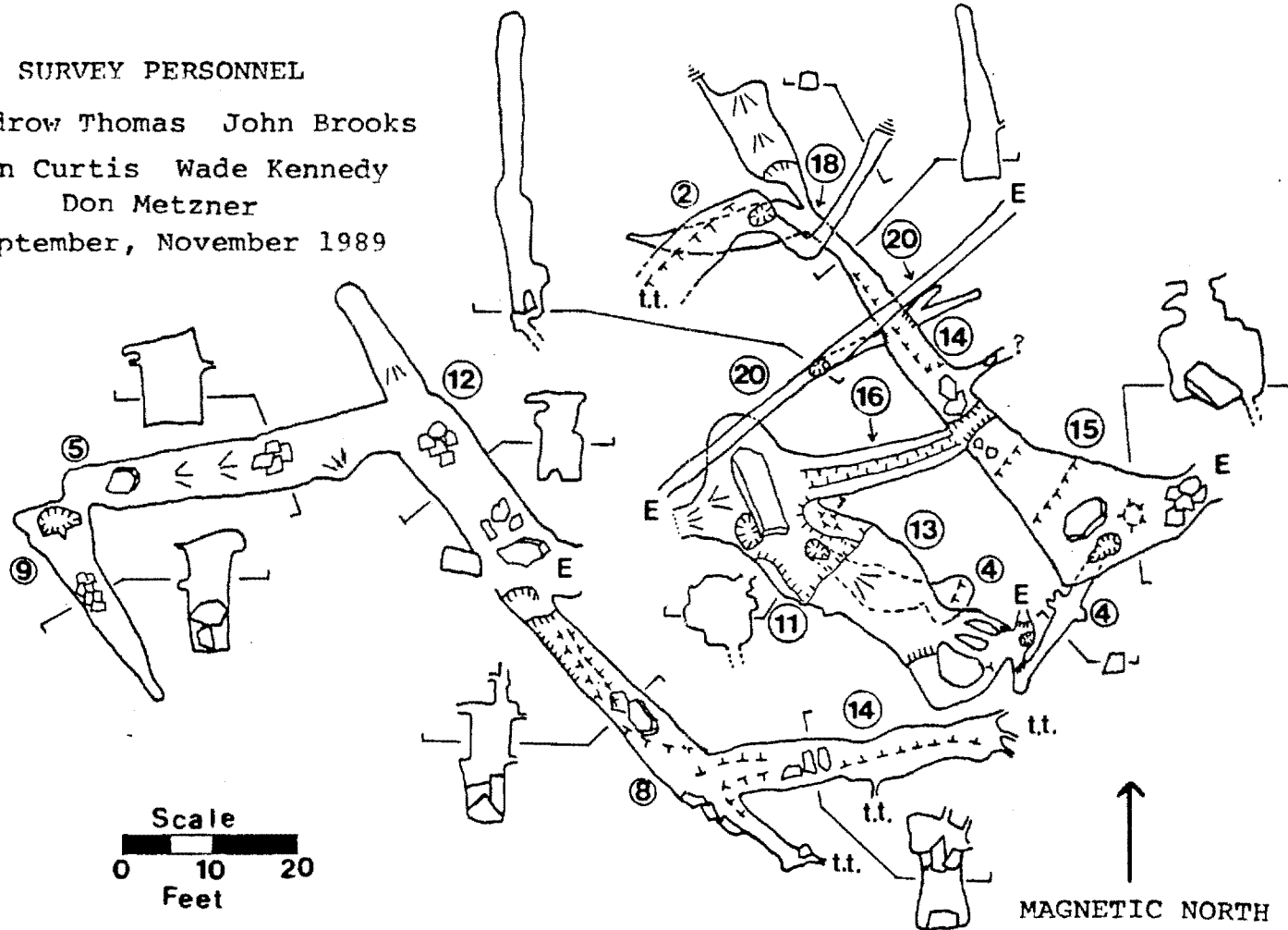
The Bower's Trail Caves are on lumber company land and permission to cave and camp is not required. A trip here would be suitable for novices. Also, the caves that I left unsurveyed would make a good beginning survey project for those who would like to learn cave mapping. There is potential for more caves to be found in the Jack's Fork Sandstone on Uphill Creek and elsewhere in the Kiamichi Mountains but more fieldwork will have to be done and more local contacts cultivated.

# Bower's Trail Caves

PUSHMATAHA COUNTY, OKLAHOMA

## SURVEY PERSONNEL

Woodrow Thomas John Brooks  
Ken Curtis Wade Kennedy  
Don Metzner  
September, November 1989



Cartography by Woodrow Thomas Computer assistance by Greg Mooty

By Victoria Johnson

The article on this page was excerpted from the February 1990 edition of the NSS News

**California: A dream for everybody.**

When you attend the 1990 NSS Convention in Yreka on July 9-13, you may want to plan to spend at least another week in California. You can arrive early for the pre-convention caving trip into the Marble Mountain Wilderness (contact Jim Wolff at 916-964-3123), or to go just across the state line for the Cave Restoration Project at Oregon Caves National Monument (contact Dave Irving or Karen Dennis at 619-284-0148). Or you may wish to linger after the convention for the second caving trip into the Marble Mountain Wilderness, or to take a special caving trip into Lilburn Cave (contact Jim Wolff at 916-964-3123), or to attend a mini-cave rescue seminar (contact Michele Richardson at 408-427-8755). We will supply further details on these trips as they are finalized. Since space on these trips will be limited, you should contact people soon if you plan to attend.

# California Dreaming

## A 1990 Convention Update

**Custom Cave Trips: Mud to Order.**

Not all of California's caves are tucked away in the far north near Yreka. There are many throughout the state, including limestone caves, lava caves, ice caves, marble caves, and sea caves. Perhaps you may want to go caving on your way to or from the convention.

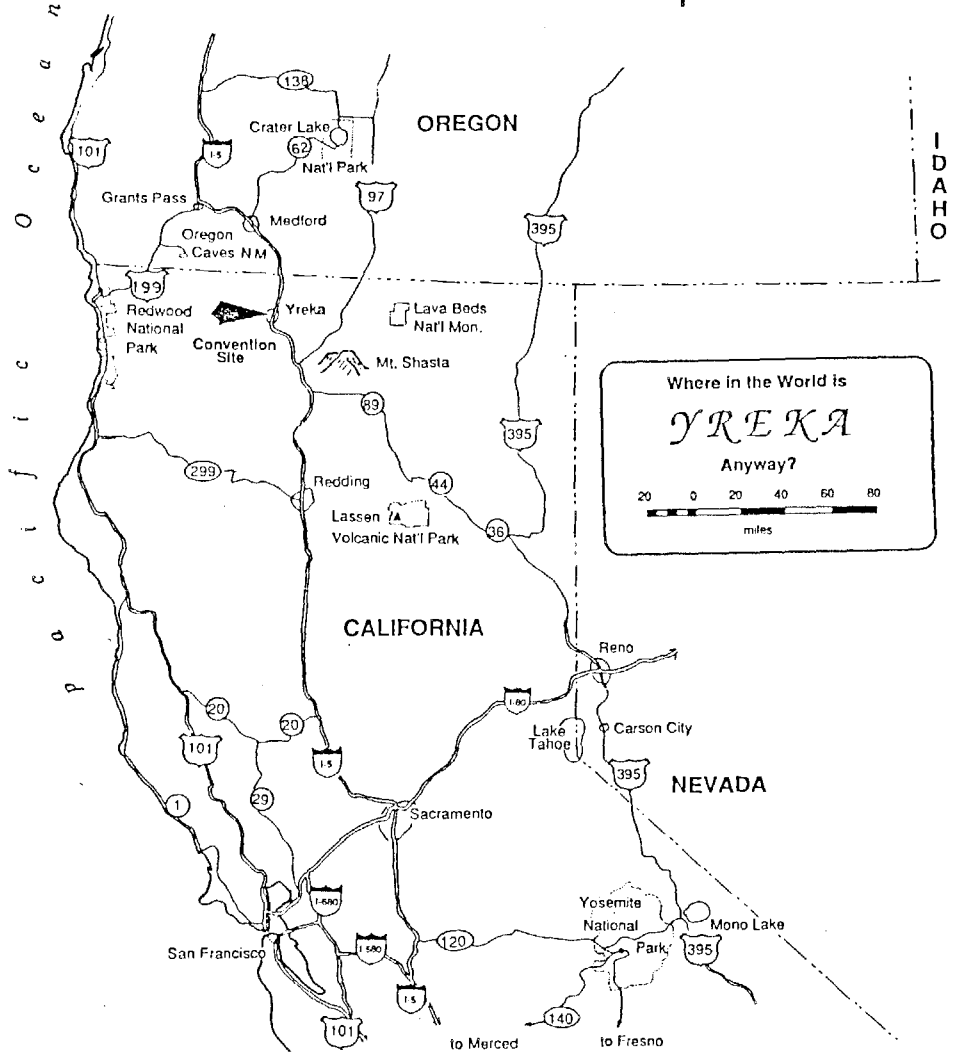
Our Field Trip Chairman, Jim Wolff, is contacting California cavers throughout the state to serve as trip leaders for a wide variety of "Custom Cave Trips." If you want to see more California caves during your stay, contact Jim Wolff at (916) 964-3123, and he will refer you to the appropriate trip leader.

**Commercial Caving: A way to see more California caves.**

The commercial caves in California have no colored lights, no lunchrooms, no plastic elves, no crystal chandeliers, no jeep trails, no organs made from stalactites, no artificial waterfalls, or any other bizarre surprises. All they have is natural beauty, paved trails, simple lighting, and a stairway or two.

On your trip to Yreka, you may choose to pass near two worthwhile limestone caves in the Mother Lode region of the Sierra. California Caverns (formerly Cave City Cave) offers both on-trail and off-trail tours. The special spelunkers' tour offers a ride in an inflatable raft across a subterranean lake, and all of the deep, rich mud that a caver would ever want. For details, contact California Caverns, 9600 Cave City Road, Mountain Ranch, CA 95246 at (209) 736-2708. Moaning Cavern features a free-standing spiral staircase that stands 120 ft high inside one huge chamber. Moaning Cavern offers regular tours, and the opportunity to rappel alongside the staircase. For details, contact Moaning Cavern, P.O. Box 78, Vallecito, CA 95251 at (209) 736-2708.

While you are at the convention, you will be close to commercial Lake Shasta Caverns. This cave will be described in a future article, along with the other featured attractions in the Yreka area.



**Announcements: Section heads, vendors, and displays.**

If you are interested in, or are responsible for, organizing a session or presenting a paper, the person to contact is the Program Chairman, Gary Mele, 2103-A Menalto Ave., Menlo Park, CA 94025, work phone (408) 436-7400; home phone (415) 326-2963. All sessions are still open for papers at this time.

Vendors and others who wish to sell items at the 1990 convention should call our Vendor Chairman, Ernie Coffman at (415) 685-9231 to arrange for space. The air-conditioned Floral Building on the Siskiyou Golden Fairgrounds can be open evenings, and can be locked. Many glass-covered display cases can be obtained from the Fairgrounds' supply.

The Fairground's Winema Hall will be

available for exhibits that NSS groups wish to display. Arrangements should be made in advance with Cindy Heazlit, our Facilities Chairman at (408) 259-3874. Winema Hall is well-lit, can be locked, and will be provided with security.

**Come to Yreka, Where the Lava Meets the Limestone**

For pre-registration forms, write to Dave Lemberg, 18740 Tilson Avenue, Cupertino, CA 95014 or call him at (408) 257-8755. A packaged single carousel slide show is available for the cost of the postage to publicize the convention at your grotto meeting. Contact our Chairman, Michele Richardson at (408) 427-0638.

AND THEN THE RAINS CAME

by Butch Fralia

Destination: Colorado Bend State Park

Trip date: March 9-11, 1990

Personnel:	James Blaise	Mark Busby	Nyla Dennis
	Jeff Duvall	Colette England	Katie Fisher
	Butch Fralia	Keith Heuss	Terry Holsinger
	Dave McClung	Amy Mercer	Ron Miller
	Mary Nichols	Bob Obele	Will Obele
	Ellen Rawson	Sean Rawson	Danny Sherrod
	Shane the Wonder Dog.		

It was a lovely day at Colorado Bend, people had been caving, ridgetraining, surveying and generally having a good old time. Now, the day was over, the obligatory eight hours work complete, it's Saturday night, time to return to camp and enjoy the camaraderie of a good campfire, good food and good spirits.

At camp, everyone involved themselves with cooking, cleaning and all those things which happy campers do after a day in the field. Some even went to local caves to begin the "fun" part of the trip.

Jeff Duvall and Mark Busby were there with lady friends. They obviously were trying to make their best impression with the camping equipment they were using. They had a two room tent with a front porch where they sat safely behind the mosquito nets eating steaks larger than the imagination and most people's pocket books. It was a time of friendly gibbing, most cavers assuring the girls they weren't really experiencing real camping. The girls thought they were roughing it.

At about 12:30 P.M., it began to rain driving those who were still up and about to their tents. The rain continued throughout the night and about 5:00 - 6:00 A.M., there were several inches of standing water around the campsites (located on top of a hill) causing most people to abandon their tents and seek refuge in their vehicles.

The author went to his truck to find it already occupied, Ellen and her son Sean were there. It was cozy but at least dry, Shane the Wonder Dog enjoyed the number of people he had to snuggle with. Oh well, a "real" cover can sleep everywhere, right? Wrong! Tilting back a reclining front seat, pulling coat over head, all is at peace with the world. Suddenly there was a firm "bonk" on the old head and the author immediately came alert for the next disaster. He discovered Ellen smiling sweetly from the back seat; "you're snoring she said." The first reaction was big deal, you should hear Dale and Bruce if you want snoring. The second reaction was "boy, do these new covers have galls!"

After a discussion of uneasy sleeping habits and various operations which would cure snoring (the one repeated the most often was decapitation), it was back to sleep for a few minutes anyway.

When daylight came, it was obvious there had been a major deluge, a bucket left out overnight accumulated approximately four and one-half inches of water. After emptying tents, pulling out sleeping bags to dry, etc. A group consisting of Katie Fisher, Butch Fralia, Keith Heuss, Terry Holsinger, Amy Mercer, Ellen and Sean Rawson, and Danny Sherrod, headed for Gorkan Creek to see how such water caves along the creek had had taken. The first hint that something beyond the usual rainfall was up was that Gorkan Creek had overflowed the park road. Last June, in a similar occurrence, there had been 3.5 inches of rain overnight, stranding cavers on the park until the flood waters on Cherokee Creek could subside. In that incidence, Gorkan Creek hardly showed signs there had been light rain such less a major downpour. Today, the water was backed up and flooding approximately 9 inches over the road bed.

Moving on to trail head parking, the cavers went to Circulus Cave (SAB 18), to find the creek flowing there and water could be heard moving down inside the cave. Upstream, Mystery Hole Cave (SAB 180) being in the bottom of the creek bed, was completely flooded and only the knowledge of its presence belied its existence. Following the creek on up to Gorkan Creek Crevice (SAB 183), this cave was still taking water but was flooded. The entrance, a large fissure goes down some 45 feet then there is a 15 foot climb down into the entrance room of the cave. The cave was flooded to the top of the 15 foot climb. This was awe inspiring realizing the volume of water this represented. Horseshoe Chimney (SAB 182), the infamous trash dump cave, was taking some water and there was standing water in the bottom (30 feet down) but nothing compared to Gorkan Creek Crevice.

Upstream, Be-Excellent Cave (SAB 219), was the show place for the day. The water level coaling down the creek was approximately two feet deep and all of it was at this time being taken into Be-Excellent. At some point during the night, the cave had been unable to take all the water from the creek, allowing it to rise some six feet above the entrance and pool on down stream to the other caves, exceeding their ability to take the water and moving on further to flood the downstream creek and flood the road. Though cavers are constantly involved with caves, seeing the world from the inside out, and having a greater appreciation than most folks of the relationship

between caves and the aquifers, it's still shocking to see this relationship in action. The volume of water being consumed by this cave and that having been consumed by the others was astounding.

The cavers moved on to Tie Slide Creek and down to Tight Slight Crevice (SAB 218). This cave was no longer taking water but at some point, the water level had risen 2-3 feet above the entrance level leaving a good residue of leaves and sticks to mark the event. Everyone could visualize in their mind, the whirlpool which must have been present as the cave took on water. Rocks dropped into the cave didn't find appreciable standing water.

They then hiked out to Big Bad Air Hole (SAB 003) and Little Bad Air Hole (SAB 076) and found these caves with water standing approximately 12 feet below the surface.

They then reconnected with their vehicle and drove to the Cherokee Creek dry water crossing. They were astounded to see the creek at least 10 feet over the crossing with water breaking in waves 5-10 feet tall at times, making the scene reminiscent of some Grand Canyon white water adventure. They could only see the creek from a distance as it had overflowed its banks somewhere upstream forming another overflow stream which crossed the road about a thousand feet back from the low water crossing. Superintendent Terin was there and related how Sulphur Springs Camp (a commercial fishing upriver and adjacent to Colorado Bend) had flooded and some folks who were in the primitive camping area were stranded. The road had washed out and it would be possible a week before it could be repaired and they could exit. Somewhere else on Sulphur Springs, three cars were chained to trees to keep them from washing down river.

Superintendent Terin, after checking his own visitors checked the other camps to see if anyone need emergency assistance, in the process he located two medical doctors who were also stranded and who would be available for emergencies if necessary. While at the crossing, the Superintendent received a radio call saying park visitors were at the residence saying the Colorado River had risen approximately 5 feet during the last hour. All went to their vehicles and drove to the river to see what was up there.

The Colorado River, about a creek bed the day before, had indeed risen and was creating without coming out of its banks onto the park land. There was discussion of visiting Gorkan Cave to determine if it was rearing but with the river rising, it was expedient to not do so.

The cavers then went to Gorkan Spring and another surprise was in store for them. This gentle resurgence wasn't gentle anymore, it was no longer possible to tell the pool where the spring originated was there, it was out of its bank and water was occasionally gushing from where the spring is known to be. Another surprise was a hole upstream from the spring gushing water about 1 foot above the surface, examination showed the spring to be running from several outlets shortly upstream. This event provided interesting information to add to the database being accumulated about the park. The water coming downstream from the creek was clear while the water flowing from the spring was quite muddy. The action of the spring verifies its relationship to local area caves, rather than having its origins in artesian sources. The pool supplying this spring must be seepage as it's never been known to run dry.

The cavers then went back to camp to work on drying gear, eating or whatever. It was at this time looking like it would be Monday before Cherokee Creek ebated enough to allow exit from the area.

At 6:00 P.M., another trip was made to the crossing. It was anticipated that by 11:00 P.M. it low enough to be safely forded. There was debate on whether it was worth the effort to leave that late.

At 10:00 P.M., someone drove to the crossing and determined that it would soon low enough to cross. The tired cavers were beginning to think that another night in the park wouldn't be so bad when the incentive came, the incentive in the form of a weather forecast indicating a high possibility of rain about 1:00 to 2:00 A.M. That decided it, all but two college students Amy and Katie, who were on spring break and looking for adventure anyway, opted to leave. At 11:15 P.M., cavers began fording the low water crossing which by now was down to about 9 inches deep. Another weekend at Colorado Bend "successfully" completed.

## EARTH DAY

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**WHAT:** In observance of earth day, we will clean trash out of several caves in the park.  
**WHERE:** Colorado Bend State Park, Bend, Texas  
**WHEN:** April 20-22, 1990  
**INFO.:** For more information contact: Keith Heuss (512-462-9574), Butch Fralia (817-346-2049) or Oren Tanbarger (512-349-0208).

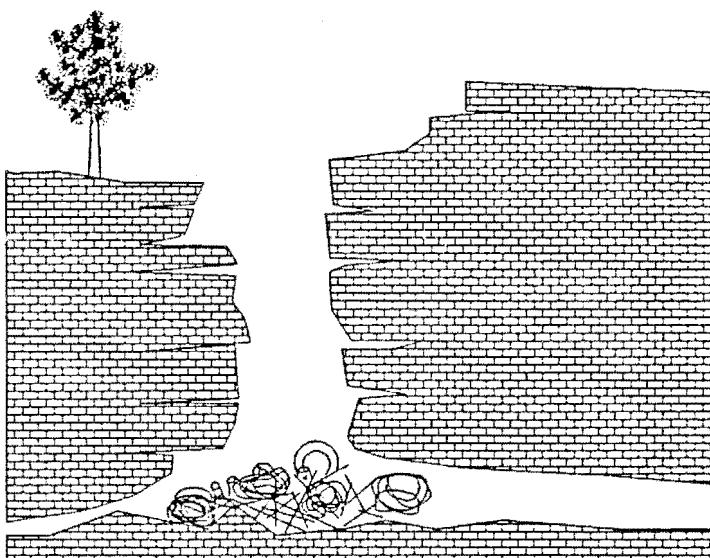
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### EARTH DAY

In 1970 the inhabitants of planet Earth, being an intelligent life form, realized the fragility of his environment. He created Earth Day to make popular this environmental awareness. But alas, it was soon forgotten. Popularity was short lived. This national event gave way to surfing or some other "west coast fad." Who knows where the idea got lost in our busy busy work-a-day world. It's been 20 years now. Someone did remember. And hopefully our environment is forgiving, and will remember us, *its most intelligent inhabitants*. We live within a fragile window known as the *life zone*. That narrow thermal notch between 32 and 212 degrees Fahrenheit. That temperate zone where water exists as a liquid. At some point in the future, it is conservable we may misuse our allowed space to a point where it is not so forgiving. Planet Earth may exit this life zone; go into thermal runaway so to speak. Planet Earth may forget is inhabited by an intelligent life form it must support, much like we forgot Earth Day!

Earth Day was created for the communication of *Environmental Awareness*. This is what separates us from the lower life forms, *advanced communications*. Another separating factor is that we are the only life form which can completely destroy our platform of life, Planet Earth.

It's the 20 year anniversary of Earth Day this year. In celebration, the Texas Parks & Wildlife Department will be celebrating Earth Day in all of its parks. Our part in helping making this observance of Earth Day a success will be taking place at Colorado Bend State Park. Earth Day is celebrated nation wide by different groups organizing clean-up projects. We, as cavers, will be cleaning trash out of several *trash dump* caves on the park. Let's not forget Earth Day this year, and every year, better yet every day. If you are interested, join us this third weekend in June.



### THE PROJECT

Many of the caves in the park have been used as trash dumps by previous owners. The trash goes in the cave and is out of sight and out of mind! But is it? Unknowingly many of the caves used as trash dumps are also located in the bottom of creek beds. These caves recharge the underground aquifers. A famous saying goes "What goes up, must come down." Reapplying this to the hydrology, we can say "What goes down, must come up." Or said another way, what goes down into the caves is not gone, it will come up again somewhere. It may be in a spring many miles away but somewhere, some day all the trash we bury will come back to us.

Horseshoe Chimney in particular has much trash in it. The cave is located directly in the middle of Gorman Creek. All of the waters of the creek pour into the cave. Previously on two occasions



trash was removed from this cave. In July 1988, 10 fifty-five gallon drums full of loose trash, 7 automobile tires and some quantity of rotting lumber was removed from the cave. In March 1989, another 200 gallons of trash, 3 tires and more lumber was removed from the cave. Much trash is still left in the cave. During our work project trip to the park in March of 1990, we witnessed first hand the enormous amount of water the cave takes. After a 3 ¼ inch rain Saturday night, Gorman Creek was at flood stage. The next day, we took the grand tour of the caves located in the bottom of Gorman Creek. All of the caves had taken much water. Horseshoe Chimney had water 5 feet deep over its entrance. There was no evidence the cave had filled up with water. The sight must have been awesome, not to mention the sounds of the 20 foot waterfall pouring into the vertical entrance. The only evidence of the flood Sunday was the debris deposited in the trees surrounding entrance.

The project of trash removal is always talked about but never finished. This is our chance to finish up the job once and for all. This will be the concentration of our efforts this weekend. We have identified at least 3 caves which have been used as garbage dumps in yesteryears. Saturday morning we will divide up into several teams, each with a target cave to clean out. We will be spending the day cleaning trash out the caves. We will be entering some of the caves to fetch trash which has washed into the caves. Bring all your full caving gear. Bring some gloves to wear while removing trash. Much of it is barb wire, glass and rusty cans. We will have a supply of 5 gallon buckets and hauling ropes for use at Horseshoe Chimney.

## CAMPING

We will be staying at the park the full weekend. Camping will be at the Blue Ribbon Campground we have been using in the past. Follow the TSA signs once inside the park. No fees will be collected. Participants must provide the standard release and waiver we have been using in the past at the park. If you already have one on file at the Colorado Bend State Park, this is good for this park for the duration of this and future projects at the park.

## CAVING

Our main objective this project will be to clean trash out of several caves. If this project is completed, we will fall back to the normal Colorado Bend cave projects. When Horseshoe is cleaned up, we may want to enter and map more in the cave. A mapping trip into the Horseshoe was begun in on the February TSA winter meeting held at the park. Bring your usual caving gear, both for use during the clean up and any possible caving after the clean up.

## UPCOMING TSA EVENTS

- April 13-15, 1990 Colorado Bend State Park, Cave Research Project. In addition to our normal cave related activities, we will be making preparations for the Earth Day project the following weekend.
- April 20-22, 1990 Earth Day, Colorado Bend State Park. See above for details.
- May 4-6, 1990 TSA Convention. The date is set, no place is yet selected, contact Cathy Berkeley (512-826-4732).
- May 11-13, 1990 Colorado Bend State Park, Normal Cave Research Project.
- June 8-10, 1990 Colorado Bend State Park, Normal Cave Research Project.
- June 10-16, 1990 NCRC, San Saba County, Colorado Bend State Park. The National Cave Rescue Conference is in central Texas this year. Contact Jay Jorden (214-398-9271).
- June 22-24, 1990 Powell's Cave, Menard County. The Powell's Cave mapping project is scheduled for the last weekend in June. Contact Terry Holsinger (512-476-9031) or George Veni (512-558-4403) for further details.

## TSA SPRING CONVENTION

by Keith Heuss

I recently talked with Cathy Berkeley, who is now the Vice-Chairman of the Texas Speleological Association. She informed me that the date of the TSA Convention has been set for the first weekend in May (4-6 May 1990). No site has been selected yet, but will be chosen soon.

Cathy needs people with presentations and programs for the day. Any other help you might offer, with registration, planning, etc. will be most appreciated. Contact Cathy at (512) 826-4732.

## THE STATE OF CAVES

(From the February 1990 edition of  
The Missouri Conservationist)

Missouri has long been known unofficially as the Cave State, and on 27 January it strengthened that claim by becoming the first state to record five thousand caves.

Jerry Vineyard, a Deputy State Geologist said "We've been recording caves in Missouri for over 30 years. We now realize the importance of caves to our water quality, to wildlife habitat, and to tourism."

The Missouri Speleological Society has now declared this to be 1990: Year of the Caves, with special events planned throughout the year. For more information about upcoming caving events contact: Dr. Kenneth Thomson, Department of Geosciences, Southwest Missouri State University, Springfield, MO 65804.

## NSS CAVE BALLAD CONTEST

It's once again time to think about the Cave Ballad Competition. A previous edition of this letter seemed to have done some good, so I'm sending it out again with hopes of getting some more great songs.

Some of you are probably wondering about the status of the long-looked for cassette tape of cave ballads. The selections have been made by me with the assistance of three others. The songs are from category O in order to avoid copyright hassles. A legal release was requested from the NSS attorney many moons ago. I'll be sending him a "prodding" letter today so there's still hope of getting the tape produced.

This year's contest will be run similar to those of previous years. There are two categories: "T" for traditional songs which have had the lyrics changed to a caving song, and "O" for completely original compositions. Awards will be given for First, Second, and Honorable Mention(s) in both categories. There will also be a best Performance Award selected from all the entries and will be judged on performance only.

Judging will be done prior to the convention so the awards can be presented then. Therefore, the deadline for entries is May 1, 1990. Each entry must be submitted on cassette tape with the following additional information: 1) Name of the Ballad; 2) Category (T or O); 3) Singer(s)/Player(s); 4) Author of the lyrics; 5) Source of the tune; 6) Date and location that the ballad was written; 7) Copy of the words (typed if possible); and 8) Brief comment on the background of the song.

There is a limit of 6 songs per entrant in this year's contest. Additionally, only songs about caving will be accepted for judging. That means that songs generally about the environment won't be judged. On the other hand, songs about the drive to the cave or similar peripheral activities are quite welcome.

Submission of ballads to the contest gives authorization for publication and recording by the NSS. Send your entries to Barbara am Ende, P. O. Box 851, Chapel Hill, NC 27514, (919) 967-2933.

The following article, as well as the one on the next page were excerpted from the 22 March 1990 edition of The OZTOIL Caver, the D/FW Grotto newsletter.

## Rites of Spring Party

by Jay Jordan

At the March meeting of the Maverick Grotto in Fort Worth, their members took up an issue that was raised last year, about the possibility of having a joint spring party, preferably at the M&W Ranch near Glen Rose. Bruce Anderson and others suggested it would be a good idea this year. As luck would have it, the Dallas/Fort Worth Grotto's Ad Hoc Party Committee chairman, Dave "Cave" McClung, was also in attendance at the Mavs' meeting.

The Mavs requested that I, as a D/FW Grotto officer, take the suggestion and invitation back to our club, with the idea of scheduling a Rites of Spring Party on the weekend of April 7-8 (that being one of the few weekends in April when not much is going on.) Since time was of the essence, phone calls were made to the D/FW club's Executive Committee, comprised of its officers, and a consensus of sorts was reached to coordinate with the Maverick club on the party.

Since the planning of this event fell between meetings, the Executive Committees of both grottos are making arrangements and a separate flyer will be mailed out with a map and details. As of now, though, the Metroplex area Rites of Spring Party will be held April 7-8 at the M&W Ranch, located off Farm-to-Market (or Ranch) Road 200, off U.S. Highway 67, in Somervell County, about 5 miles northeast of Glen Rose, Texas.

Festivities -- including barbecue/fajitas, swimming, libations, camping, slides, a sauna and perhaps even a hot tub (!!!) -- will begin at high noon on Saturday, April 7. The party will continue through the wee hours of the evening and wrap up around noon on Sunday.

To get to the M&W Ranch from Fort Worth, drive south on Interstate 35W past Burleson to the Alvarado exit for U.S. 67, then go west on 67, through Cleburne. Drive over the Brazos River bridge and then about 2-3 miles, turning south on FM 200. Bear left at the Y intersection. Within a mile or so, cross the Brazos again and in another mile or so, the road takes a hard left. The road to the ranch takes a hard right. There is an entrance fee for camping of \$3 to \$4. Fort Worth residents can also get to the M&W by taking U.S. 377 to Granbury, then taking state Highway 144 to U.S. 67 and turning left, then going a mile or so to the FM 200 right turn.

From Dallas, get on U.S. 67 southeast off I-35E and drive past Midlothian, then through Alvarado. Continue under the I-35W overpass and go through Cleburne, then past the Brazos River bridge to the FM 200 intersection. Make a left or go south on FM 200. Bear left at the Y intersection immediately after turning. Cross the Brazos River again and the road will make a hard left in a mile or two. Make a hard right there into the ranch.

Volunteers will be needed from both clubs to help coordinate this important event. We'll need people to bring chips, dips, beans, hot sauce and other munchies, slides, sauna metal, hot tub parts or ideas, frisbees, kites, long lost armchair cavers, etc. Reasonable club expenses for refreshments, etc. will be needed. We need cooks for fajitas. Greg Mooty? Steve Dalton? Mike Cagle? We need a sauna tent.

Please help make this party the success it should be.

## NCRC Texas Seminar

from staff reports

The National Cave Rescue Commission of the National Speleological Society presents Cave Rescue Operations and Management, NCRC 1990, at Colorado Bend State Park and San Saba, Texas. The dates are June 16-23, 1990. Co-sponsors are the National Association for Search and Rescue, Texas Department of Health, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, City and County of San Saba, San Saba Emergency Medical Service and the San Saba Independent School District.

### About the seminar

The seminar consists of extensive class work and field work in all phases of cave rescue, including organization and management, underground environment, vertical rescue, hauling systems, communications systems, extrication techniques, and medical management. Basic and advanced course material is presented for students, who typically include emergency services personnel, cavers, emergency management and land management personnel.

The course provides approximately 70 hours of class work and field work in eight days. Tent camping and meals are included as a package, although local residents attending the seminar can pay for the seminar only. RV hookup is available at \$8 per day and there is one motel in town.

All courses will be physically strenuous. Participants must be in good physical health and must sign a liability waiver. Students should be prepared to work in difficult situations (mud, guano, Texas heat and humidity, mosquitoes and cactus) and negotiate vertical drops of 25+ meters, while under supervision.

### Equipment

All necessary tools and equipment will be furnished for the students with the exception of personal caving/safety equipment. Each student must have at least the following equipment available for inspection at check-in registration:

1. Sturdy helmet with chinstrap (climbing grade recommended - UIAA or better)
2. Three independent sources of light, at least one capable of being helmet mounted (electric preferred)
3. Sturdy, rubber-soled, lace-up boots
4. Two 20 foot sections of 1-inch tubular webbing
5. Full seat harness (chest harness also recommended)
6. Three locking carabiners
7. Rugged clothing
8. Gloves with leather palms
9. Descending system (rack, figure-eight, etc.)
10. Ascending system (Gibbs, Jumars, knots)
11. A small, heavy-duty pack or knapsack.

### Accommodations and Meals

All students should register for the meal package, to more easily deal with our irregular hours and remote locations. Tent and RV camping is available in San Saba Mill Pond Park and the meal plan is available through San Saba High School. The High School will have full breakfast, lunch and dinner. Showers are available in Mill Pond Park and at the high school.

For more information, please contact:

Rod Dennison  
Public Health Region 1  
Texas Department of Health  
(817) 778-6744

or

Alana S. Mallard  
Bureau of Emergency Management  
Texas Department of Health  
(512) 458-7550

### Enrollment Status

#### Level 1

Begins at noon on Saturday, June 16. Level 1 teaches current emergency management and cave rescue techniques and provides basic rope work, caving and management instruction. It is tailored to the various needs of agency personnel with no medical or cave-related experience, cavers with little medical and rescue-related experience, and medical personnel with little wilderness rescue or caving experience. Level 1 is a prerequisite for Level 2.

#### Level 2

Begins at noon on Saturday, June 16. Level 2 is for graduates of previous NCRC Level 1 courses. It is predicated upon the assumption that students have learned, retained and practiced the basic skills covered in Level 1. It teaches advanced skills in medical, management and vertical and horizontal rescue techniques.

#### Level 3

Begins at 8 a.m. on Monday, June 18. Level 3 is offered to Level 2 graduates. The course is designed to enhance the skills attained in Level 2.

### Instructor Training

(Level 3 only.) Begins at 8 a.m. Saturday, June 16. A two-day instructor training track will be offered for Level 3 students who wish to work toward certification as an NCRC instructor. Those completing the instructor training track will be required to assist with instructing Level 1 and 2 students and will be expected to help with evening skills checkoffs.

Those successfully completing the work as instructor candidates will be required to serve in an apprentice instructor role prior to final NCRC certification.

For NCRC Seminar 1990 registration information and a form, write:  
NCRC Seminar 1990  
P.O. Box 27204  
Austin, TX 78755-2204

Fees are as follows:

Level One (limit 40 students) is \$85 non-NSS, \$70 NSS.  
Level Two (limit 25) is \$85 non-NSS, \$70 NSS. Level Three (limit 15) is \$85 non-NSS, \$70 NSS.

Instructor training is \$20. The meal package fee is \$140. Tent camping for Saturday-Sunday is \$14. RV Hookup for Saturday-Sunday is \$56. The NCRC Manual, serving as the textbook, is \$15. The 2nd edition is required. After May 15, add \$20 for late registration. Make checks payable to: NCRC Seminar 1990.

## Advanced Rappelling Course

Dates: April 21,22 and 28,29

The course is 32 hours long, with 8 hours of classroom instruction and 24 hours of hands-on instruction. The course includes 4 methods of rappelling, 3 methods of ascending a rope, 4 methods of belay, equipment construction and care, self rescue, and basic partner rescue from a line. Problem solving and safety are stressed.

The first day will be the classroom portion, which will be held at the National Guard Armory on Highway 180 in Mineral Wells. Going west from DFW, the armory is on the right of the highway, past the golf course. Entering Mineral Wells from the east, there is a large sign indicating a National Guard training site on the old Fort Wolters Army Base. Ignore this sign!

The hands-on portion of the course will be held at Lake Mineral Wells State Park located on Highway 180 at the eastern city limits of Mineral Wells. This part of the course will be held rain or shine, with dangerous weather (lightning, tornadoes, etc.) being the exception.

Class starts at 8:00AM and ends at 5:00 PM. There will be a 1 hour lunch break. It is recommended that students bring a picnic lunch. It is possible to drive into Mineral Wells for lunch; but the word is: the restaurants are crowded.

There is lodging available in Mineral Wells for those wishing to stay overnight each weekend. For camping reservations at the park, contact: Lake Mineral Wells State Park, (817) 328-1171, 8AM to 5PM daily.

There will be a \$10.00 course fee per person to defray instructor's expenses. For those not camping at the park, there is a park use fee of \$2.00 per car per day. There are fees for campsite use at the park.

Each student MUST bring to class a helmet, leather gloves (no welding or farmers fencing gloves: too stiff), cleated shoes or boots, a seat harness or 25 feet of 2 inch tubular webbing, and about 6 feet of inexpensive rope for knot tying practice. If any student has any additional vertical gear or can borrow any, please bring it. Rappelling ropes are especially needed.

An accurate head count is needed, so please contact Ernest Parker, (817) 447-8344 (unlisted) if you wish to attend.