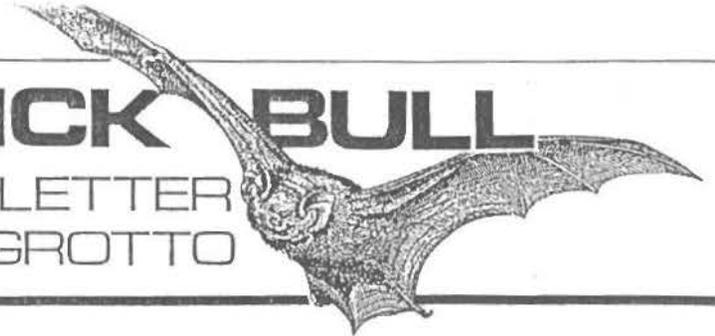


THE MAVERICK BULL

THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER
OF THE MAVERICK GROTTTO

MARCH 1991



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THE MAVERICK BULL is the monthly newsletter of THE MAVERICK GROTTO, an internal organization of the National Speleological Society (NSS 6-322). The editor invites all individuals and other grottoes to submit articles, news, maps, cartoons, art, and photographs. If the material is to be returned, a self-addressed, stamped envelope should accompany it.

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EXCHANGES: THE MAVERICK GROTTO will exchange newsletters with other grottoes. Contact the editor.

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 MAVERICK GROTTO will also provide three free issues to persons interested in becoming members.

MEMBERSHIP POLICY: Any individual with interests, beliefs, and actions consistent with the purposes of THE MAVERICK GROTTO and the National Speleological Society is eligible for membership. Acceptance of new members is based on payment of dues and a mandatory three trip requirement with at least three different grotto members. These three members shall act as sponsors. At least one sponsor must attend the meeting at which the membership vote is taken. A two-thirds majority vote of the members present will be required for acceptance.

MEETINGS: Meetings are held the second Tuesday of each month, at SMOKEY'S RIBS, 5300 East Lancaster, Fort Worth. It is a little less than one mile west of Loop 820 and next door to a K-MART. The time is 7:00 P.M., and the food is good.

Chairman: Dale Ellison
2202 Dan Gould Rd.
Arlington, Texas 76017
(817) 493-0463

Vice-Chairman: Bruce Anderson
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Fort Worth, Texas 76106
(817) 246-6313

Treasurer: Jimmy Thomas
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Editor/
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1136 Bear Creek #1001
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(817) 545-3300

CAVE RESCUE: Call Collect (512) 446-0234



ERNEST PARKER'S VERTICAL REPELLING CLASS WILL BE HELD APRIL 20TH AND 21ST AND MAY 4TH AND 5TH. THERE MAY BE A MAKEUP CLASS HELD MAY 11TH AND 12TH.

IT IS NOW TIME AGAIN TO PAY YOUR DUES.
THE DEADLINE IS APRIL 1ST, 1991.

ON OUR COVER IS DON, ALEC, AND CORIEN LLOYD OUTSIDE RIVER STY'X RIVER ENTRANCE. SEE JIMMY THOMAS' REPORT ON RIVER STYX INSIDE.

Well, for once we had a full complement of officers at the February meeting. President Dale Ellison called the meeting together at 7:40 PM on the 12th of February, the second Tuesday of the month, like clockwork. Each meeting Russell Hill brings the Library-on-wheels. This library contains hundreds of volumes on caving, video cassettes, computer disks, etc. You may check out any of this simply talk with Russell.

We had a few visitors at this meeting they were: Tom Torres and Terry Doversberger. They have been in Scout's cave which is about 2 1/2 hours northeast of Phoenix. Also visiting was Gary Griffin.

Scott Fee is missing the Speleodigest, contact him if you have it.

Donna Anderson has a new title, Public Relations/Membership Committee Chairwoman.

Lechiguilla Notes: Greg Moody and Woodrow Thomas are charting more passage and need an experienced cave diver.

Dale Ellison got a job. He is missing his soap operas, but works at Olympus Corporation, which makes cameras and medical instruments.

Ernest Parker announced there will be a Rescue team competition on October 11th thru 13th. The competition ranges from very advanced vertical rescues to simple face pick-offs.

Butch Fralia announced that Jesse of Colorado Bend State Park will be off the park March 1. There is no more Parks Division just a Land Division. This adds to the list of caves by 300. The Gorman Falls area will be opened at a celebration held April 19th thru 21st (Earth Day Weekend). Mildred Patterson who managed the area for a long while will be there. TSA has been asked to put together presentations. One speaker will discuss chemical spills. Steve Dinsmore is being transferred to Lake Ray Roberts, near Gainesville.

The DFW grotto asked to lead a trip to Robber Baron cave in San Antonio, TX. There will be free camping. For the date contact Orin Tranbarger care of the Bexar County Grotto or Mike Pearson 1-214-694-2310.

There is an internal debate going on in the NSS. Officers of NSS grottos must be members of the NSS. The debate is that every member should be a member. We encourage this. You can get a VISA card, use a travel agency, and many other benefits.

Theresa will be going to Florida, she found the balance of our patches, the treasures report and the internal organization form, which is required to be filled out and sent to the NSS.

There was a suggestion to clean River Styx cave and re-survey from the beginning the whole cave. We need 4 or 5 good survey teams.

Several comments were made during this discussion, one was we should have one grotto project for the year and concentrate on it. Volunteers for the study of this project were solicited. Bruce Anderson, Butch Fralia, Jimmy Thomas, and David Finfrock volunteered to discuss, cuss, reject, alter, and none of the above, about the River Styx Survey. Can we get some help from Lubbock? Bruce Anderson estimated we would need 3 or 4 full weekends to complete the survey and clean the cave. These weeks would be spread out over the whole year, so the project would be very easy.

Butch Fralia reported on the tax exempt status, he talked to Jay Jorden about the necessary forms, but has not received them yet. The IRS should be getting it to him soon. All donations to the Grotto would then be tax deductible. Temporary status would be held for 3 years, at the end of that year we would become permanent.

Incorporation of the grotto is also being looked at for non-profit status. Filing fees are about \$200 to \$300. Without this protection the officers possibly could be liable if anyone sued the grotto.

President Dale Ellison announced that there will be a \$50 cash prize awarded to the author of the Best Trip Report. This award will be given away at the end of the year. The best article published in the Maverick Bull, judged by the membership, must be original work, never published before.

Steve Jung needs photographs of cavers to place on the cover of the Maverick Bull. If you have any loved ones you want to show off, send the photograph to Steve, use his address under Editor on the second page of this newsletter.

Finally: PAY YOUR DUES, April 1st is the deadline.



GENERAL AVERELL PIT

POCAHONTAS COUNTY WV

by John Ganter

Sometime in 1984, Gordon Mothes was flying near Little Levels when he saw through the trees a very large pit resembling a sotano. Upon asking Dug Medville about this, it was decided the thing was probably General Averell Pit. This cave had been explored by the Pittsburgh Grotto many years before, and Charlie Williams was rumored to have done some surveying there.

The details escape me, but somehow Patty Mothes and I were dispatched to check the cave out. There was some folklore about the downstream needing a wetsuit push. We climbed down, down, down, down, down, down, down through dry dusty breakdown for a long time in wetsuits. Then the roof stayed level and the breakdown sloped down into a large passage. There was a register bolted to the wall. In the register was a note from Charlie Williams telling us to "Leave survey notes here."

We went downstream. The stream was only a couple of inches deep, and there was giant breakdown everywhere. After a thousand feet or so, we were able to climb down through the breakdown to find the stream flowing in a narrow slot.

We returned to the register and climbed up, up, up, up, up through dry dusty breakdown for a long time. It was rather miserable and I never had much interest in going back to General Averell Pit.

Until about six years later, in September of 1990. The weather was unsettled, and Bill Storage and I were having trouble finding caves with minimal flood hazard. We found the pit again and surveyed in. Without wetsuits.

It took 40 stations to reach the register. The breakdown is pretty amazing. The survey reveals that you squeeze and climb for about 300 vertical feet.

We reached and opened the register. The book is deteriorating and releasing



John Ganter

Scalloped dunes just downstream of the register area.

some very strong hydrocarbons, but we were able to see entries in 1978, 1984 (Patty and I), and two unknown cavers in 1988. General Averell Pit is not too popular. Charlie Williams had not even

been back to check for survey notes.

Turning north, we surveyed through dry passage for about 10 stations. The passage is quite large, with the floor and east wall nearly continuous breakdown. Along the west wall is an intermittent lower level, which has a lot of mud and seems to hold little promise.

Just down from the register the stream appears. It comes out of a pile of roaring breakdown, but we could find no way through. Turning downstream, we surveyed 15 stations through some very sizable passage to about where Patty and I stopped in 1984. Then we headed out, climbing gingerly through the breakdown and exiting after 8.5 hours to a thunderstorm.

Description

The large entrance (see cover) is located on the hillside west of Rt. 219, overlooking Little Levels. The high side is about 60-70 feet, while the downhill side can be downclimbed through assorted trash. A crack between the hanging wall and breakdown at the

(continues on next page)



John Ganter

Bill Storage surveying in the breakdown.

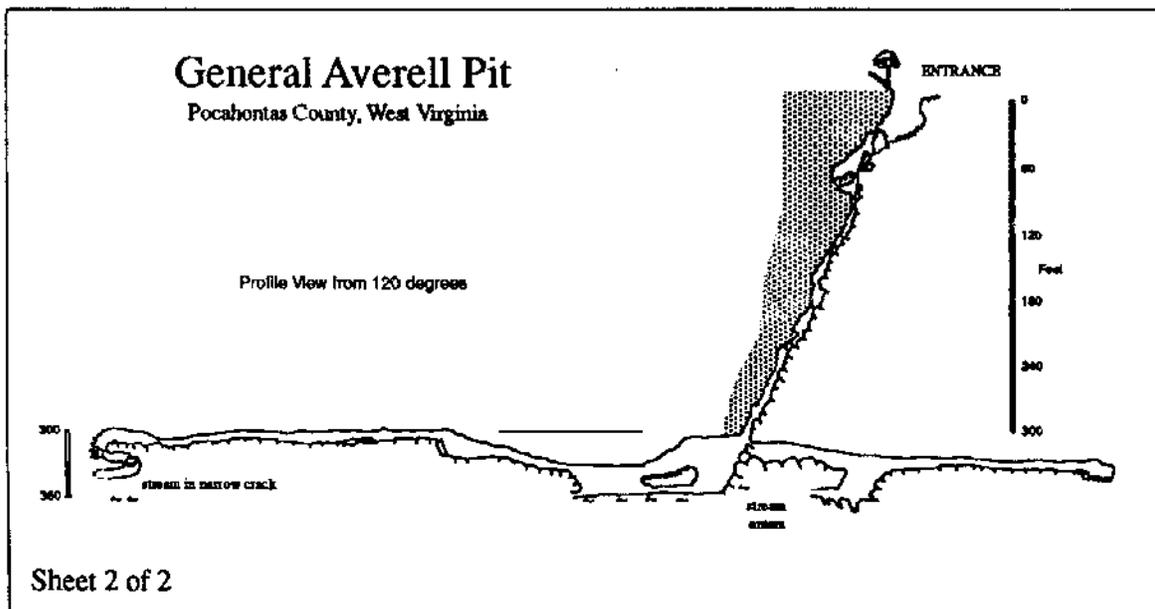
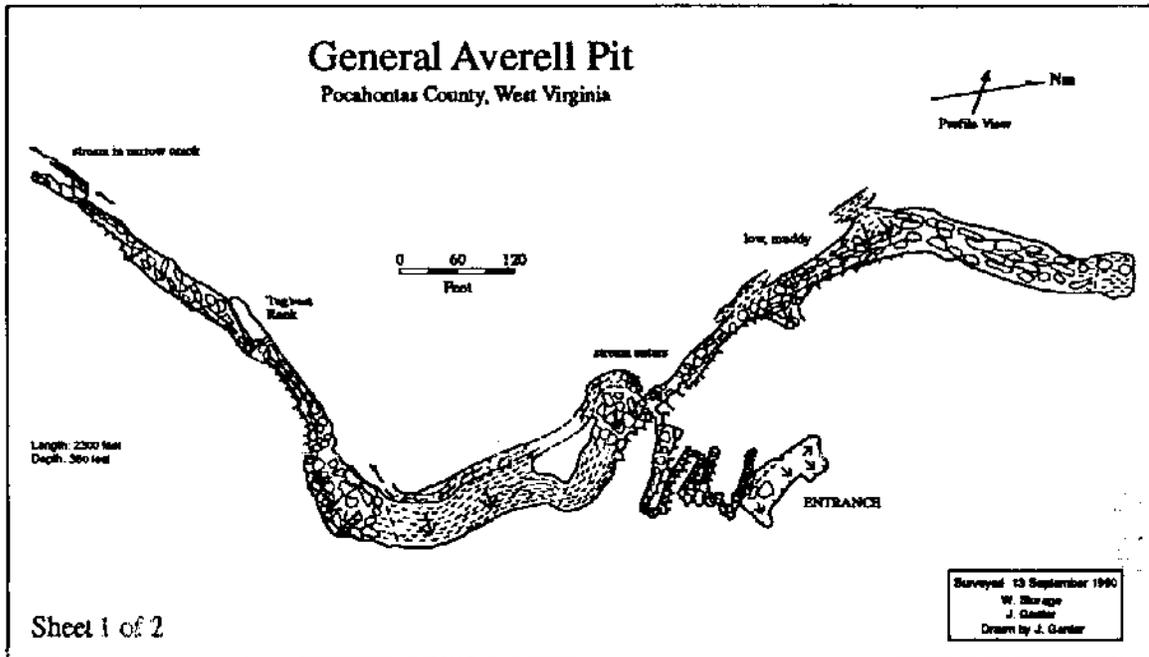
GENERAL AVERELL PIT from page 5

bottom leads to a 10 foot downclimb. From here, the cave corkscrews down through breakdown piled against one wall of bedrock. The breakdown seems fairly stable, but caution is in order. Towards the bottom, there are several possible routes. At a depth of about 300 feet, the breakdown pile opens into a sizable passage containing the cave stream. The stream appears from breakdown which cannot be penetrated.

Going north, large breakdown-floored passage leads to several low muddy areas west and to a termination.

Going south, an upclimb leads to large passage. It appears that the cave backfloods to considerable depth in this section, with water spilling over and scalloping the mud banks. Several hundred feet of passage, almost all breakdown-floored, leads south and then west. At this point, a downclimb leads to where the stream can be seen flowing in a narrow crack.

The pit extends through most of the Greenbrier Series, bottoming out in the Sinks Grove limestone/lower Denmar formation. The entrance "jar of marbles" may be developed down the plane of a fault. Almost all of the "stream level" passage has similar breakdown extending up to the east in the wall/ceiling. General Averell Pit appears to fit in between the downstream sump in Upper Martha's Cave, and the upstream reaches of Locust Creek Spring. There are sizable gaps in each case.



look at the full range of possibilities that a resurveying project at River Styx could accomplish:

(1) A **Maverick Grotto** social caving activity where we could introduce new cavers to caving, invite other grottos to assist in our project and socialize as cavers do best. (2) A clean-up project to promote cave conservation and education. (3) A surveying project to introduce surveying to those who have never surveyed and a project where the grotto can see the results of the surveying efforts.

I presently teach mapping at TCU in geology and would enjoy the challenge of surveying River Styx. I would volunteer to lead the resurveying part of the project, including producing a finished map of a resurveyed River Styx.

I enjoy surveying and think River Styx is a cave where a lot of **Maverick Grotto** cavers can enjoy themselves doing a variety of fun activities. A few cavers interested in surveying would be needed, but mainly a lot of cavers who enjoy caving and having a good time are needed most.

These suggestions are humbly offered to hopefully stimulate new ideas of an expanded purpose for the **Maverick Grotto**. Please join us at this month's meeting and share in the discussion with your ideas and suggestions.

Trip: River Styx

When: March 16 & 17

Leader: Jimmy Thomas

(817) 599-8278

A river entry is planned on the trip, but others can use the dry entrance if you choose. This is planned as a fun trip, so please call for more information or just come if you know the way.

Maverick Grotto Annual Report for 1990

by Jimmy Thomas

The annual report was sent to NSS for 1990. This report listed the present officers and grotto members. We showed to have 46 members and enough grotto members who are also NSS members to give the **Maverick Grotto** two votes at the Congress of Grottos in New York state.

The Grotto had several members actively engaged in cave related activities that we were proud to report. Earnest Parker and his exceptional vertical training class. Butch Fralia's work with the TSA on the Colorado Bend project. Our public relations chairperson, Donna Anderson. If any of you are involved in any caving projects in 1991, please let me know so I can report them to the NSS.

Financial Statement for 1990

Beginning Balance	\$487.50
+ Deposits	422.00
- Checks Written	<u>512.33</u>
Ending Balance	\$397.17

Potential Project For Grotto

Views and reflections by:
Jimmy Thomas

This is a report on the possibility of resurveying River Styx Cave as a **Maverick Grotto** project. I would like to start with the concept that it would be good for the grotto to have a place where local cavers could go and socialize with other cavers, such as the Colorado Bend project. This is a good example of a successful project at a statewide level, and the **Maverick Grotto** is active in this project.

It is suggested that a River Styx project could be added as another area for regularly established caving activities and not be in competition with the Colorado Bend project. Interest in caving is growing and this is the time for the **Maverick Grotto** to extend its bat wings and spread knowledge of caving and cave conservation. As interest grows in caving, so does the need to become more involved in cave education and the understanding of the fragile cave environment.

Planned activities, such as maybe a chili cook-off, bar-b-que (*gout, rabbit, squirrel, etc*) or other suitable outdoor activities could be planned for each one of the trips. Making the trip into a full caving experience and not just another work trip. This could be a project that we could invite friends and other grottos members to attend and enjoy.

River Styx needs a good cleaning.

What a great project for cavers who are disturbed by people who paint cave walls. All we need are some cavers who are willing to help clean the cave and material to do it with. Maybe even a sign at River Styx, asking people not to paint the cave and how important it is to keep its natural beauty. Most people who paint the cave are kids and they usually don't have any idea that people regularly visit the cave.

I would suggest that the actual resurveying project be used as a possible long term project for the grotto. We should focus on the path that the goal of resurveying could lead us on, rather than on the idea of accomplishing the goal itself.

Much of surveying is measurement taking and very little idea of what the whole process accomplishes, (a map of the cave). A resurveying project would be very technical for a few and could be a rather enjoyable learning experience for a group surveying for the first few times. I think most people get their fill of surveying after a short time, which is good. If everybody stayed excited about cave surveying, we would soon run out of cave to survey. Also, cavers enjoy other caving activities, such vertical caving, which the grotto also actively supports.

It is proposed we discuss the concept of a **Maverick Grotto** project at the meeting and

MORE TRAVEL TIPS: EUROPE

Jerry Muller, who provides some of the art work currently to be found in the *Speleograph* (specifically some "Joe Caver" cartoons), had some reactions to the problems encountered by our U. S. trio visiting Eastern Europe as set forth in the August issue. Basically, Jerry says if you have a choice when going to Europe, visit Germany. As he writes, "I am an NSS member and an active member of the Blue Ridge Grotto [Roanoke VA] and at present am stationed in Fulda in what now is the Federal Republic of Germany. Over the past year and a half I have also been an active member of the Höhlenforscherclub of Bad Hersfeld. This is a very active group of European cavers who nearly all speak English and love American contact. As for the cost of an average weekend trip with camping, I will spend about 100 DM (about \$70). This includes camping and visiting six to eight caves.

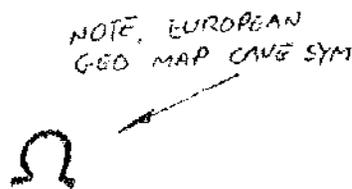
"When dealing with caving in Europe, first I would suggest Germany. Germany has many fine wild caves, as well as very cheap admission at show caves. And excellent food and—of course—beer! As well as being situated in the middle of most European countries.

"When arranging travel, do as you would in the States. Get in touch with the local clubs first. Believe it or not, to have an American group for guests would be the highlight of the year for a German caving group. Leave the rest to the local club.

"Carbide is very cheap but, again, the best source of this is the clubs. But be prepared for a shock. Carbide doesn't come in gravel size here. It comes in a large greyish mass, very heavy, about the size of three softballs glued together. You are handed a piton hammer, with the words, "This is good carbide. You try this."

I tend to agree with Jerry, who has also been in touch with others still technically associated with the former European Grotto of the NSS, that we don't really need a grotto made up mostly of U. S. cavers in Europe. The local

clubs are there to make friends with. Look at it this way: if a couple of German cavers appeared in a U.S. city to be there for a year or so, wouldn't we naturally enjoy befriending them and including them in our activities? But a European network to help get one oriented might help. For more information when headed to Europe, contact Jerry (he's in the NSS directory)—unless of course the U.S. military decides to send him to explore caves in the desert sands of the Arabian peninsula. Yes, Jerry, if we can believe the stories about the Dead Sea Scrolls that survived centuries of being hidden in caves and the cave reports I've seen from an occasional NSS traveler or worker (e.g., Don Davison in Oman), there are caves down there. In case I forget to write you about this, Jerry, you might want to write Dick Blenz in Bloomington (the NSS cave files) about what he has on caves in Saudi Arabia and other neighboring countries.



APPALACHIAN KARST SYMPOSIUM

This event, set for March 23-26, 1991, at Radford University, could be a calendar item but at this point in time it seems worth longer mention. Scientists may well want to plan ahead to be involved. It's rather like Friends of the Karst but will come with a smaller ticket price; the latter tends to meet in exotic—and costly—locations.

The Department of Geology at Radford University is sponsoring a conference focusing on karst of the Appalachian Mountain Region (Valley and Ridge and Appalachian Plateau physiography provinces) of the United States and Canada. The major subject areas of the symposium are geology,

hydrology, and geomorphology (including physical geography). The conference will address both basic research on karstic processes and environmental and applied problems in karst terranes.

The symposium is being held as a part of the Fiftieth Anniversary Celebration of the National Speleological Society and, as such, will include some perspectives on the historical development of karst science. All papers will be published after the symposium in a proceedings volume.

The preliminary schedule of the symposium is as follows:

Saturday, March 23

field trips to some local karst localities that will emphasize speleogenetic and hydrogeologic processes and environmental problems.

Sunday, March 24

further field trips, registration, informal meeting of the Friends of Karst, and evening social function.

Monday, March 25

papers; evening program.

Tuesday, March 26

papers; evening banquet.

Anyone interested in attending the meeting and those wishing to present a paper should write to Dr. Ernst H. Kastning or Karen M. Kastning, Department of Geology, Box 5801, Radford University, Radford, VA 24142 (703) 639-4666.



OZONE HOLE NOT SHRINKING

Scientists had hoped that the meteorological situation this past year would actually decrease the size of the ozone hole that forms each southern winter over the Antarctic. Not so. The hole was as extensive as ever. Ultraviolet light measurements used to gauge the phenomenon since 1987 indicate the amount of ozone loss over Antarctica in August 1990 was as great as has ever been recorded. As one scientist put it, "This means that the ozone hole is not going away." (*Fairfax Journal*, 10/23/90)



EVER FORGET THAT ONE MOST IMPORTANT THING, BECAUSE YOU DIDN'T
MAKE A LIST? HERE IS ONE, IT MIGHT HELP, IT MIGHT NOT.

FOOD	CLOTHING	SHELTER	EQUIPMENT	
BEER	BANDANNA	FOAM PAD	ARMY KNIFE	MACHETE
CAN OPENER	BAVACLAVA	GROUND CLOTH	BACK PACK	MAPS
CHAMPAGNE	BIB	RAIN FLY	BATTERIES	MIRROR
COFFEE	BOOTIES	SLEEPING BAG	BINOCULARS	MOLESKIN
COOK SET	BOOTS	TENT	CAMERA	MOUTHWASH
CUP	CAMP SHOES	TENT STAKES	CANDLES	NOTE PAD
EARL GREY TEA	DOWN JACKET		COMPASS	PENCIL
FOOD	EXTRA LACES		DAY PACK	RECORDER
FORK	GAITERS		FILM	ROPE
GUEL	GLOVES		FIRST AID KIT	SAW
ANNEL	HAT		FISHING GEAR	SEWING KIT
ERBS	INNER SOCKS		FLASHLIGHT	SHOVEL
ICE	LEATHER BELT		FLUTE	SOAP
ICE BOX	LINER GLOVES		GRAND PIANO	SUN SCREEN
KNIFE	LONG JOHNS		GUITAR	SUNGLASSES
PEPPER	MITTS		ICE AXE	TAPE RECORDER
POT HOLDER	MUFFLER		INSECT REPEL.	TAPES
POT SCRUBBERS	OVER MITTS		LANTERN	THERMOMETER
SALT	RAIN GEAR		LIP SALVE	TOILET PAPER
FT DRINKS	SHORTS			TOOTHBRUSH
MOON	SWEATER			TOWEL
LOVE	SWIM SUIT			WHISTLE
WATER BOTTLE	T-SHIRT			
WATER PURIFICATION	UNDERWEAR			
WATERPROOF MATCHES	VBL SUIT			
WINE	WOOL PANTS			
	WOOL SHIRT			
	WOOL SOCKS			