

THE MAVERICK BULL

THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER
OF THE MAVERICK GROTTO

Volume 6 Number 11

Produced By Charlie C

November 1992

Who Is To Know...

The dark...

Damp rocks...

Soft flutter of bat's wings

Quiet sounds of water dripping

Or violently rushing

Who is to know

What lures us back

Into timeless black

To confront our inner souls

And emerge reborn.

*Evelyn W. Bradshaw
December 1984*

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

NOVEMBER 7-8, MYSTIC CAVE AREA. For this monthly expedition contact Greg Mooty 214-480-6390 or Woodrow Thomas 903-395-4431.

NOVEMBER 10, MAVERICK GROTTO MEETING. The election of officers for 1993 will be held this meeting. At the October meeting, Butch Fralia agreed to run for Chairman and has no opponent. Danny Sherrod agreed to run for Vice-Chairman. Mark Porter agreed to run for Treasurer. Earnie "The Rope" Parker agreed to run for newsletter Editor/Sec.

NOVEMBER 13-15, COLORADO BEND STATE PARK. This weekend will be the fifth anniversary of the project.

NOV. 14-15, CAVERNS OF SONORA RESTORATION. The 30 person maximum for this year's project has been reached. Any one still interested in attending is welcome to submit their names to be put on a waiting list in case someone cancels. If you are one of the 30 confirmed cavers and find you cannot attend, please contact George Veni (512) 558-4403. ASAP so he can replace you with someone from the waiting list. This year's project will involve fine-detail clean-up in one of the decorated areas of the cave.

DECEMBER 8, NO GROTTO MEETING.

DECEMBER 27-30, MEXPELEO '92, hosted by SMES and AMGS at Grutas de Cachuamilpa, Taxco, Guerrero, Mexico. Contact Peter Sprouse at P.O. Box 7672, Austin, Texas 78713. Or call him at (512) 873-0256. A write-up of this event can be found elsewhere in this newsletter.

JANUARY 25-27, 1993, 4th MULTIDISC. CONFERENCE ON SINKHOLES, Pampa City, Florida. Contact Barry F. Beck, Florida Sinkhole Res. Inst., University of Central Florida, Orlando, FL 32816, 407-823-5645.

AUGUST 1-6, 1993, NSS CONVENTION. For information and registration forms for the 1993 NSS Convention, contact: Bill Devereaux, convention chair, PO Box 4081, Salem, OR 97302-8081, 505-363-3831.

Dear Dale and fellow Mavs,

Greetings from "sunny Florida!" Well I survived Hurricane Andrew but the area south of where I live is a mess. Looks like a bomb went off, ... a big one. Due to increased air travel out of Dade County I have not been able to get to Texas lately but hope to make at least one caving trip there before winter arrives. Major discoveries in the submerged caves of Cozumel, lots of new passage mapped. Also getting a little Vertical workout in West Georgia and South Alabama, not much, but maybe more when things cool down. Please change my postal contact to the following address:

R. D. Milhollin "Dave"
P.O. Box 595004
Miami, FL 33159-5004
(305) 652-6338.

Further hope to have side-mount and no-mount underwater apparatus ready for fall exploration in the Oklahoma Mystic Cave System Project. From a cursory external survey of Blue Spring it appears that with proper thermal protection and variable-mount tank arrangements a diver should be able to enter the first- sand bottom chamber to at least a depth of 20 feet, penetration 30! No way to know more until inside the first chamber. Best wishes with all projects; let me know about any grotto trips to the spring areas of Missouri.

Thanks,



JUST SAY--"NO!"

By Steven Martin Cohen
Reprinted from NSS News, August 1992.

It won't go away by itself. You can't ignore it. You're not a "Great Guy" if you say "yes." It's a subject no one wants to talk about. They avoid it like the plague. It will frustrate you. And yes, it may even get you killed someday. What is this un-breechable, horrible subject? Group skill compatibility! And it's an increasing problem.

"But he's our friend."

"But she's our friend."

"We can't exclude them." Yes you can! And you should.

What do you do about the caver who can't go the last quarter mile? What do you do about the caver who can't climb the cable ladder or the rope after 12 hours of strenuous caving, or even six? What will you do when the time comes to initiate a rescue call-out because that questionable caver, your friend, reached his limit, and your group can't get him out this time? Maybe it's only exhaustion. Maybe she just doesn't have the upper body strength. Maybe that caver doesn't have the endurance. Maybe she needs to lose just a few more pounds. Maybe he just hasn't quit smoking yet, and he gets out of breath a little too often. The reasons don't matter.

I'm not advocating that groups start pointing fingers at each other in waves of frenzied paranoia. Some trips are for beginners, some are intermediate, some are advanced. Other trips are vertical and wet. Many trips are just for fun and frolicking, with something for everyone.

The cavers on your trips should be carefully chosen though, for two reasons:

- 1) It's not fair to the group for one caver to slow things down and jeopardize the group's enjoyment, and
- 2) It's not fair to the caver in question. He will be struggling to keep up, and the odds of a disaster go up.

I'm not talking about matching personnel to within .01% of strength and endurance. I'm talking about certain cavers clearly and obviously being outclassed by the rest of the group for a given cave and set of physical requirements.

Private trips often materialize to avoid this very mismatch problem (clicks that form with people who simply like to cave with each other is a different issue). After the trip, inevitably someone has to face the medicine: "Why wasn't I told about the trip?"

Try to regulate yourself. Ask questions about the trip. Be prepared to disqualify yourself from certain trips. Despite what they say, all men and women are not created equal; and that's a fact of life. It's nothing to be ashamed of. Would you rather be dead, or know you were responsible for dragging half the community out of their beds to haul you out of a hole?

Accidents happen-at any skill level. It's not my intention to lay guilt on those that need rescuing. But if certain incidents could be avoided by the use of intelligent, mature discretion before a trip, it's worth breaching that uncomfortable subject.

Know your own abilities. Don't delude yourself. After a few months and a few bears, it's amazing how selective some people's memories can become as far as their recollection of the trouble they had in this or that cave, and the burden they placed on the group they were with. If you consistently misjudge your skills, perhaps you should examine this. It doesn't help you or the group. By insisting you should go on certain trips, you put people in the uncomfortable position of either saying yes, against their better judgement and gritting their teeth during the trip, or saying no and hurting your feelings. It's a lose-lose situation and a bad position to put your friends in.

Caving isn't all sacrifice. Sometimes you want to have a little fun with cavers of similar skill (from higher and lower skill points of view). Why must this be an issue?

It hurts to see all your friends go off to the cave without you. It hurts them too. Sensitive, intelligent people can work out the problems, though. This problem can be transformed into a very win-win situation. Trips of matched individuals can be assembled, and caves of the right level of challenge can be visited. There are many caves in most regions, and more important, there are many cavers in any region from which to assemble these trips. ■

SURVEY FOR VERTICAL TRAINING

Several people have requested that Earnest Parker give a more advanced class on vertical techniques. Part of their request is to include techniques that Earnest has been unable to cover in his regular class because of time restrictions. Topics tossed around are more ascending systems, knot passing, change overs and a more advanced rescue course.

Either a more advanced class or a rescue course would, out of necessity, be limited to those with previous vertical training or experience in vertical work. No vertical beginners considered.

The advanced class could probably be given in two or three days, depending on the amount of material covered.

A rescue course would probably require eight days or so spread over a period of time, depending on the level of training given. Such a class would require a lot of equipment be amassed; including ropes, lots of webbing, carabineers, pulleys, ascenders and a stokes basket. Minimum enrollment to have a class is fifteen.

There is the possibility of entering a rescue competition next October if enough people are interested.

Ernest is conducting this interest survey to determine if there is enough interest to warrant planning these courses. If you are interested, please fill out the questionnaire on the back cover of the newsletter and mail it to Earnest. In case you don't already have it, his address is:

Earnest Parker
616 N. W. King
Burleson, Texas 76028
817-447-8344

PRODUCT REVIEW

Ultra-bright LED Flashlight

By Rick Olson, NSS News, October 1992

Last December while reading the latest issue of *Sky and Telescope*, I came across a test report on miniature flashlights built around an ultra-bright light emitting diode (LED). These LEDs are not as bright as a conventional bulb, but lower intensity lights have always been acceptable as backup sources. Red light at 665 nanometers may seem an unlikely wavelength for caving, but there are some advantages. Even though this part of the spectrum is not optimal for our eyes, our retinas will increase their sensitivity to light by as much as 10,000 times (in adapting to darkness). Like your savings account, dark adaptation can go quickly, but red light causes minimal loss of that sensitivity. There is also a practical application in surveying; using an LED source to put a light on station eliminates confusion for the compass reader.

Two outstanding characteristics of the LED sources are efficiency and longevity. These flashlights will deliver peak brilliance for over 30 hours on two AA cells, and the LED lamp has a life span of over 100,000 hours. The lamp draws only 50 milliamps, and a current-limiting circuit extends the life span of both batteries and bulb. The existing models were not robust enough for caving, so I contacted the company* and asked if a Mini-Mag could be adapted. Mr. Talmage agreed to try, and about two weeks later it arrived in the mail. (Is America great or what?!) I loaded it with two new Energizers and turned it on for an endurance test. Twenty seven days later it was still burning, although dimly, so I replaced the batteries and gave it a field test. In the small passages above Cathedral Dome in Mammoth Cave, this flashlight was perfectly adequate, and even in a large tube like Cleveland Avenue, where reflection from walls is negligible, the light intensity adequate out to 15 feet without waiting for complete dark adaptation.

Recently, yellow ultra-bright LEDs have become available. These have similar performance characteristics to the red lamp, and, because our eyes are more sensitive to yellow, they seem brighter. However, they will also prevent complete dark adaptation of the retina and so it is a tradeoff situation. The choice is yours.

These lights are a bargain at \$27.50 each, and no other battery-powered light will last as long. The savings in battery and bulb replacement make them cost-competitive in the long run.

*Talmage Engineering, 438 A Beachwood Road, Kennebunkport, ME 04046, (206) 967-5945.

Mexpeleo '92

Mexpeleo '92 will be held 27-30 December in Taxco el Viejo, Guerrero, Mexico. In its previous incarnation Mexpeleo '89 in Valles, S.L.P., 325 cavers from at least seven countries attended for original and sport exploration and slide talks. This year's event will be adjacent to the Grutas de Cacahuamilpa, one of Mexico's premiere show caves which will be open for attendees. Directly below the grutas are two 3500 meter long river caves known as Dos Bocas, both of them bore-hole through trips which can be traversed by participants.

A number of exploration projects will also be organized by Mexpeleo '92. These include caves needing mapping and/or pushing, as well as new karst areas to check. In the evenings there will be slide presentations on topics relating to Mexican cave exploration, biology, archeology and paleontology. Other attractions in the general area are the world-class museums of Mexico City and a number of snow covered volcanic peaks which can be climbed.

The Mexpeleo site is at the facilities of the Autonomous University of Guerrero School of Earth Sciences, located on the south side of Taxco el Viejo. This town is situated along the highway partway between the cities of Taxco and Iguala. There are large meeting rooms, showers and bathrooms. Camping will be on the spacious school grounds, with a small stream running through. For those wishing indoor lodging, there are many hotels in Taxco, 15 kilometers to the north.

Sponsors: Sociedad Mexicana de Exploraciones Subterráneas
Contact person: Ramon Espinaza
Fuente de la Península #19
Tecamachaico, Mexico 53950 MEXICO
Phone: 525-515-32-34

Association for Mexican Cave Studies
Contact person: Peter Sprouse
P.O. Box 7672
Austin, Texas 78713
Phone: 512-873-0156

The Southern Plains Region

The Southern Plains Region is an Internal Organization of the National Speleological Society. Dues for individual and family membership is currently \$4.00 per year. Grotto membership is sustained by the exchange of newsletters. If you are on the membership list and you have not established your membership, you may wish to do so. Current member grottoes are: KSS, COG, NTSS, TROG, Maverick, and D/PW. Current officers are: David Kowalski, Chairman, Bill Howard, Vice-chairman, Wayne White, Sec/Treas. Send dues to SPR, c/o Wayne White, 412 North Walnut, Medicine Lodge KS 67104. For more information, contact any officer.

Contemporary Cave Use Study

Of interest to all grottoes, the Contemporary Cave Use Study (CCUS) has been established as a committee of the National Speleological Society. The CCUS supplies cave register containers and books in exchange for the data collected by participants. For more information contact:

John M. Wilson
9504 Lakewater Court
Richmond, VA 23229
Home: 804-704-0339
Work: 804-359-2137
Fax: 804-359-4207
Farm: 703-944-5828

Geological Survey Topo Map Exchange

There is an arrangement with the Library at the U. S. Geological Survey whereby they receive grotto and region newsletters that contain some material of permanent reference value and in return, the grotto or region is entitled to receive free topographic quadrangle maps for use in your projects. As a rough guide, it is reasonable to request as many maps as you publish issues. In any case, please request maps several at a time, rather than singly. Requests should reference this exchange arrangement and must be signed by a grotto officer. All maps are to be considered grotto property and should not end up in the permanent possession of an individual who was in charge of the project.

Because of a critical shortage of shelf space, the USGS may have to deny the exchange agreement with some newsletters that contain mostly material such as cartoons, jokes, and puzzles which are of little permanent value.

All exchange newsletters, request of maps, and other correspondence should be addressed to:

U. S. Geological Survey Library
National Center—MAIL STOP 950
12201 Sunrise Valley Drive
Reston VA 22092

Correspondence between NSS and the Exchange and Gift Librarian of the Geological Survey in April 1980 confirmed that this agreement was still in effect. However, if a request for topographic maps is sent to the Branch of Distribution where regular paid orders are filled, that Branch does not provide material on exchange and cannot honor requests. Be sure to send request to the above address and not to the distribution branch in Arlington, Virginia.

Request should always be reasonable. The Chief Librarian twice had to refuse exorbitant request (in both cases for more than 400 maps). As an example, a group that regularly publishes a bi-monthly newsletter might request a half-dozen maps a year.

If opportunity came disguised as temptation, one knock would be enough.

To teach is to learn twice.

Money is better than poverty, if only for financial reasons.

A small town is a place where you have to walk around a dog enjoying a nap on the sidewalk.

Albert Einstein once admitted that figuring out his U.S. income tax was beyond him—he had to go to a tax consultant. "This is too difficult for a mathematician," said Einstein. "It takes a philosopher."

You will never find time for anything. If you want time you must make it.

When a stranger identifies you from a friend's description, it's best if you don't hear the description.

Two businesswomen were having lunch and talking about the office, taxes, the cost of living, and their families.

"I raised four boys before I came back to work," one woman said proudly.

"That's a nice family," said the other woman. "I wish I had four children.

"With a touch of sympathy in her voice, the first woman said, "Don't you have any children?"

"Yeah," said the other woman. "I have eight."

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THE MAVERICK BULL is the monthly newsletter of THE MAVERICK GROTTTO, an internal organization of THE NATIONAL SPELEOLOGICAL SOCIETY (NSS G-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-address stamped envelope should accompany it.

REPRINTING ARTICLES: Internal organizations of the NATIONAL SPELEOLOGICAL SOCIETY may reprint any item (unless copyrights belong to the author, as will be stated in the byline) first appearing in THE MAVERICK BULL, if proper credit is given and complete copy of the publication is delivered to the editor of THE MAVERICK BULL at the time of publication. Other organizations should contact the editor at the address herein.

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

COMPLEMENTARY NEWSLETTERS: THE MAVERICK GROTTTO will provide complementary newsletters to persons or organizations who provide cave access (i.e. landowners) or otherwise provide assistance to cavers. THE MAVERICK GROTTTO will provide one free issue to persons interested in becoming members.

SUBSCRIPTION RATES: Subscription rates are \$10.00 per year for members and non-members.

MEMBERSHIP POLICY: Any individual with interest, beliefs and actions consistent with the purposes of THE MAVERICK GROTTTO 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 E. Lancaster, Fort Worth. It is a little less than one mile west of Loop 820 and next door to K-Mart. The time is 7:00 P.M. and the food is good.

CARBIDE: Grotto carbide is available at the meeting on even numbered months. The carbide is free to all members and is sold to others at the price of fifty-cents per pound. Anyone needing carbide at other times should contact Butch Fralia (817/346-2039) to arrange for pickup.

LIBRARY: Support your Grotto Library. Russell Hill will be accepting books, magazines articles on cave related topics, copies of homemade cave videos, etc. for our library. We wish to thank Russell for his efforts each month to bring and set up the Grotto Library.

CHAIRMAN: Butch Fralia
3412 Walton Ave.
Fort Worth, Tx, 76133
(817)346-2039

VICE-CHAIRMAN: Ed Young
3030 Oak Ridge Place
Grand Prairie, Tx, 75051
(214)262-8188

SECRETARY/EDITOR: Dale Ellison
1208 Dan Gould Rd.
Arlington, Tx, 76017
(817)473-0463

TREASURER: Jimmy Thomas
3705 Bluebonnet Circle
Weatherford, Tx, 76087
(817)599-8278

CAVE RESCUE: CALL COLLECT (512)686-0234



Name _____

Number of family members interested besides yourself: _____

Phone number and area code if not listed in the Maverick Grotto mailing list:

_____ Course desired: _____

Subjects I would like to have covered are, _____

Approximate time of the year you would most like the course to be given:

