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# THE MAVERICK BULL

THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER  
OF THE MAVERICK GROTTO

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Volume 9 Issue 8

August 1995



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**The Maverick Bull** is the monthly newsletter of The Maverick Grotto, an internal organization of The National Speleological Society (NSS G-322). The editor invites all individuals and other grottos to submit articles, news, maps, cartoons, art and photographs. If the material is to be returned, a self-addressed 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 stated in the byline) first appearing in *The Maverick Bull* if proper credit is given and a complete copy of the publication is delivered to the editor at the time of publication. Other organizations should contact the editor of *The Maverick Bull* at the address herein.

**Exchanges:** The Maverick Grotto will exchange newsletters with other grottos. Contact the editor.

**Complementary Newsletters:** The Maverick Grotto will provide complementary newsletters to persons or organizations that provide cave access (i.e. landowners) or otherwise pro-

vide assistance to cavers. The Maverick Grotto will provide one free issue to persons interested in becoming members.

**Subscription Rates:** Subscription rates are \$15.00 per year for non-members and free for 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 E. Lancaster, Fort Worth. It is located less than one mile west of Loop 820 and next to K-Mart. The time is 7:00 p.m., and the food is good.

**Carbide:** Grotto carbide is available at the meeting if prior arrangements are made. Carbide is free for the

asking. Contact Russell Hill at 220-7108 or Butch Fralia at 346-2039 for more information.

**Library:** Support your Grotto Library. Russell Hill will be accepting books and magazines 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:**

Mike Anderson  
532 Arroyo Dr.  
Fort Worth, TX. 76108  
(817) 448-9764

**Vice-Chairman:**

Michael Nelson  
7232 Harwick Ln.  
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(817) 292-7722

**Treasurer:**

Mark Porter  
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Garland, TX. 75243  
(214) 271-8147

**Cave Rescue: Call collect:**

(512) 686-0234

### Photo Credits

This month's cover photo was taken by "that lady" in Fantastic Caverns. It shows Chad, Lisa, and Christopher Fenner about to embark on a tour in Fantastic Caverns, "the only ride-through cave in North America." See article inside.

### Other Credits

Editor: Chad Fenner

Editor-in-charge-of-English: Lisa Fenner

## Minutes For the July Meeting

### Maverick Grotto, July 11, 1995

The July meeting informally began around 7 p.m. The business portion was called to order at 7:40 by Grotto President Mike Anderson.

#### Visitors:

None

#### Announcements:

There are still T-shirts available.

Mike Nelson has been in contact with other grotto program chairmen on program ideas.

#### Treasurer's Report:

Not available.

#### Old Business:

Vertical Practice: Donna Mosesman suggested using a rock-climbing gym rather than Mineral Wells State Park. Mike Anderson said he'd look into it. He also committed to getting a date by the next meeting.

#### New Business:

None.

#### Trip Reports:

Donna Mosesman went to River

Styx and has pictures.

Pam Massey went to Carlsbad into Lower Cave and Lake of the Clouds.

Chad, Lisa, and Christopher Fenner went to Fantastic Caverns commercial cave while on vacation.

Jay Jordan went to the TCMA work project.

The meeting was then closed, and we saw a video on the Organ Cave System in West Virginia.

## Editor's Ramblings

Happy June!

Well, my string of trip reports finally dried up. Hopefully it was just a slow month and next month we'll be back to the string we've had for a few months now.

But since there were no other trip reports, I resorted to strong-arming my relatives into doing reports. Lisa, Christopher, and I went to Fantastic Caverns while on our vacation. Afterwards, I tried to talk Lisa into writing a

trip report. She had a better idea. (You'll have to read on to find out what her idea was!)

Attention Web crawlers: Check out "The Caves of Europe" at: <http://www.ciger.be/ceram/hdtv/eurso ut/index.html>. It's pretty graphic-intensive, but that just means there are a lot of cool pictures, and they are worth the wait. It's promoting a new film series by the same title.

Charles Haskett, in the last issue

of the Houston Grotto's *Speleospace*, said that he would reveal his secret to getting 23 cavers to eat communally if I tell how we get our newsletter reproduction to come out so good. Well, I guess we'll never know. That's top secret, proprietary information. Sorry, Charlie, only good-tasting newsletters get to look this good.

Good caving.

-CF

## The August Meeting

The August meeting will be held on Tuesday, Aug 8 at Smokey's Ribs,

5300 E. Lancaster, at 7 p.m. This month we will be having an open

mike night. Bring your photos and stories and show off what you've got.

### *Fall Foliage and Caving in the Ozarks*

John Langevin has decided to head to Arkansas this October and check out the local color. Not to worry, though; this trip will be more than just to see the incredible autumn colors in the Ozarks. He plans on taking in a few caves as well. The trip will be Saturday and Sunday, October 28 and 29. The trip is open to whomever, but limited to the permit size. Various skill levels will be available from strictly horizontal to vertical. For more info, call John at (817) 924-1919.

DATE PICKED FOR  
VERTICAL PRACTICE

Mark your calendars. The first two weekends in October -- that's the 7th/8th and 14th/15th -- will be the date of the next vertical practice with Earnest Parker. The exact location is still being worked out, but keep the dates open in any case.

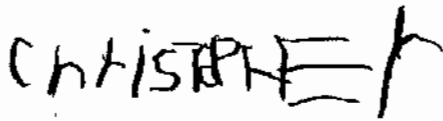
## Fantastic Caverns

by Christopher Fenner, age 4, as told to Lisa Fenner

Once we went into a cave. Then we said, "Hello." Then we holded on to each other in the night cave. Then we had somebody to make it go. And then it stopped, and then that lady took a picture.

It wasn't a bad cave. It wasn't scary, and no bear in there.

There was rocks, too. There was a movie and it was about plants and animals.



the end.

*Editor's note: In case you couldn't figure it out, my family and I went to Fantastic Caverns while we were on our vacation last month. Lisa thought it would be fun if we got Christopher, our son, to do a trip report.*

*One other thing. Those of you who were at the D/FW Grotto meeting a couple of months ago might remember Pete Lindsley did a program on saltpeter. Saltpeter is derived from cave dirt rich in bat guano. It can be used to produce gunpowder. During the Civil War when the Yankees had the Confederate ports blockaded, saltpeter was mined from southern caves and used in the war effort. The process of extracting saltpeter from the cave dirt is long and time-consuming. Fantastic Caverns has an interesting saltpeter exhibit just outside the entrance to the cave.*

*You know, this might make a very interesting newsletter article sometime in the near future. Any takers?*

## NSS Mortgage Paid Off!

by Dave Luckins, NSS President

NSS members will be pleased to

learn that convention attendees took up Dick Blenz's challenge to match all the money raised during convention to pay off the existing mortgage on the NSS office property (actually, the annex and the lots across the street from the office).

The amount raised was \$10,020. That, plus Dick's contribution, pushed us over the top.

During the Friday night awards banquet we had Dick come to the head table and write the check for his matching contribution. Then Kevin Smith, NSS treasurer, wrote a check for the entire mortgage balance and handed it to Al Mueller, National Speleological Foundation president. Al accepted the check and, with a great big grin, announced that he would immediately stop foreclosure on the property.

Then came the traditional mortgage burning. Dave Luckins and Al Mueller each held a page of the mortgage while Dick Blenz applied the flame from his carbide lamp to all the pages. What a lovely fire.

Thanks to everyone who attended the convention and donated. Special thanks to Dick Blenz who made the whole thing possible by making his very generous offer and donation.

Paying this mortgage off at convention was a lot of fun but we wouldn't have been in a position to burn the mortgage this year without the many donations made by our members over the years and we appreciate everyone who has contributed to eliminating the debt.

Oh, by the way, the entire mortgage was paid off with donations. Not one penny of our members' dues were used...that's really super!

## A Texan's View on Commercial Caving on BLM Land

by Mark Minton

*(Ed's note -- There has been a lot of discussion about the NM Bureau of Land Management allowing companies and individuals to get cave permits and take commercial tours*

*through BLM caves. Here is one person's view on this matter.)*

My main concern with the idea of commercially run caving trips on federal land is that we could end up a few years from now with a situation similar to that for running wild rivers in the American West. Commercial outfitters routinely get the lion's share (>75%?) of those permits. And not because they outbid the ordinary private citizen. (There are multi-year waiting lists for the most popular rivers.) Rather, the commercial operators are "guaranteed" their share of those permits. This amounts to privatising public land just the way grazing, timber, and mining permits do.

It seems to me we do not need to add to that system, but rather should work to dismantle it. If commercial operators are allowed to get caving permits, it should be on the same first-come, first-served basis as for the rest of us. And to further safeguard our rights, I would propose a limit of how far in advance one could apply. It is easy for a commercial operator to fill a permit whenever it is, but harder for the individual to know they will be available at some unknown time far in the future. While this may mean all allowable permits are not used, that should only be looked at as good for the caves rather than as a loss of revenue or "waste" of resources. (I seriously doubt that the federal agencies will actually make any money from commercially run caving trips. \$70 plus 3% of receipts wouldn't go far. More likely the rest of us taxpayers would end up subsidizing the commercial cavers just like we do for all of the other commercial users of public land.)

Mark Minton

## Making a Flashgun

by Peter Jones

*(Ed's note -- The hardest part of making a flashgun to fire the old-style flashbulbs is getting the trigger and battery/capacitor circuits. Peter Jones, a noted cave photographer from Shot in the Dark Photography (also the sole supplier of the Firefly slave units in*

America), posted this on the *Cavers Digest* this month. I thought it might be useful.)

Making a trigger would require little more than a few parts, a soldering gun, and an hour or two of your time. From a local camera store, buy a short PC cord that has the end on it that you can plug into your flashgun. Cut off the opposite end. From a Radio Shack store, buy a simple push-button switch that you can mount onto the cap of a plastic 35 mm film container by drilling a hole through the cap and the base of it. Feed the wire through the base of the drilled film can, then tie a knot in the wire to take up any tension in the wire. Strip off about half an inch of the insulation around the wire and solder one wire to one side of the switch leads, the other wire to the other side of the switch lead. Attach the cap to the base of the film can and you have a handy switch that can be plugged into the flashgun at any time. It sure beats manual shorting of the PC lead with a knife blade or some such similar thing.

The question about capacitors for flashguns is easily answered, as I've made many flashguns with them over the years. Again, I use parts available at a Radio Shack. I've made mine by using a nine-volt battery and a 35-volt, 1000-micro-farad capacitor. These capacitors measure only about 1/2 inch in diameter and are about 3/4 inch long with two leads coming out either side by side or on opposite ends, depending on which style you want. In any case, the key here is that the capacitor voltage should meet or exceed the battery voltage, which this obviously does in my case (nine-volt battery, 35-volt capacitor). In layman's terms, the micro-farad measurement indicates how much of a wallop the capacitor can hold and discharge when applied across a flashbulb. The 1,000 mf is more than adequate as is the nine-volt battery.

Basically, I solder the leads of a 9 V battery clip directly across the corresponding capacitor leads. I then solder the wires of a socket that will hold a bulb across the capacitor lead.

There's also some sort of a switch mechanism (push button or socket for a slave unit to be plugged into) soldered in series between the capacitor and the socket to act as a firing mechanism.

The whole works is then placed inside a small utility box that will hold all the wiring.

Once the battery is plugged into the 9 V socket, it charges the capacitor. Once the capacitor is charged, the resistance across it approaches infinity, thus keeping the battery from further discharging. With a bulb plugged into the socket, it fires by completing the circuit (by closing the switch) and discharging the capacitor's charge through the bulb. It is essentially a model of simplicity.

With flashguns rarely available now, this circuit takes all the mystery out of making your own. The capacitor need not be very big and the battery doesn't have to be exotict. Flashguns are cheap and easy to make.

## New Version of WinKarst Released

WinKarst is the most extensive and fastest cave mapping software written for Windows to date. It has been verified with complex cave systems with over 18,000 stations. Because the program does not contain a method to enter survey data, it may be freely distributed as freeware. However, the raw data format is ascii, and survey data files can be created with any text editor. The program is distributed with sample cave data to get the user started. User feedback would be greatly appreciated.

### What's New

1. Improved printing. WinKarst now includes a print preview operation in which the user can view what will be printed before it is actually printed. Since the aspect ratio of a window will generally not match that of a standard piece of paper, this function is useful for seeing what else will be printed in a close-up view of the cave. Note that

autoscaled plots will always fill the page, depending on the paper's orientation. Printing in the previous release of WinKarst would only fill the page if the Window was maximized.

2. Expanded support for multiple caves within a cave survey. All of the caves in a system can now be plotted in relation to each other in the same window. The entrances or control points in each cave can be labeled, and each cave can be give a unique color. Double-clicking near an entrance symbol brings up information about that cave.

3. Three layers of hierarchical objects, systems, caves and surveys. Each object can be viewed separately in its own window. For example, the user can have one window with the entire cave plotted and another window with only a single survey in that cave. The mouse's focus only applies to the object in the window. For example, double-clicking near a station in a survey window will only cause a search of station locations within that survey, not the entire cave. Color by depth is applied to the extent of the object, i.e. survey, cave or system. The coordinates reported in the status bar will jump as the mouse passes from window to window.

4. WinKarst now comes with extensive help system. The help system is context-sensitive, cross linked, includes keywords for searching, and has browser sequences and bitmaps with hot points for complex functions. The help pages are printable and include the descriptions of both the raw ascii and binary data file formats.

5. The user interface has been revamped. The old textural representation of the cave is gone, as are the complex pull-down menuing sequences. Each of the program's main controls for objects, e.g. caves, stations, loops, etc., are now accessed through dialog boxes. It is no longer necessary to select an item, repeat and repeat to enable the desired choices. The user now can check boxes and push buttons in a single dialog before returning to the map. Keyboard accelerators remain for main functions. Most of the dialogs contain a

list of the objects in the cave; surveys for example. The user can pick a name in the list and learn about it by pressing the Info button or see what color it is in the color box. The dialogs can be operated with either the mouse or keyboard.

WinKarst may be obtained in one of three ways. One, it is available from either of the popular caving Internet ftp sites: [chert.lmu.ac.uk](ftp://chert.lmu.ac.uk) or [speleology.cs.yale.edu](ftp://speleology.cs.yale.edu). The Internet can be accessed through many of the online services such as CompuServe and America Online or through many direct corporate or university connections. Two, for those people who are willing to risk the email system and understand MIME encoding, I will email it to them (a one-meg-plus file). Contact me at [gp@ssd.intel.com](mailto:gp@ssd.intel.com). Finally, three, by surface mail.

To obtain a copy by surface mail, send \$5 to cover postage and materials to: Garry Petrie, 19880 NW Nesucca Drive, Portland, Oregon 97229.

## New Compass Software Released

COMPASS for Windows has a new third-party product called "Compass Home Companion." It is the first product written by another author to

support COMPASS. Compass Home Companion is a Windows-based utility that compiles cave statistics not provided by other Compass programs. The program calculates survey length by year, number of surveys per year, length by person, number of surveys by person. It also does two different types of circular rose diagrams: length and frequency. The yearly results are displayed as beautifully colored bar charts. The rose diagrams are displayed as colored circular graphic diagrams. There is extensive Windows-style, context-sensitive help.

### HOW TO GET A COPY

"Compass Home Companion" was written by Paul Burger and is currently available as freeware. (Later versions will be distributed as shareware.)

Copies are available through anonymous ftp from:

[speleology.cs.yale.edu](ftp://speleology.cs.yale.edu)

The filename is: COMPHOME.ZIP. It will be in the "incoming" directory for a few days. It may be moved to

[/pub/caveing/cave-software/ibm/compass](ftp://pub/caveing/cave-software/ibm/compass)

In some instances, there may be an older version in the main directory and a newer one in "incoming." Check the dates and be sure to load only the newest version. The program is compressed, so it must be decompressed

using PKUNZIP. PKUNZIP is available on most bulletin boards.

Since this is a preliminary release, comments, criticism, and suggestions are welcome. All correspondence should be directed to:

Paul Burger

1618 Secret St.

Golden, CO 80401

email: [paburger@nhpsun.cr.usgs.gov](mailto:paburger@nhpsun.cr.usgs.gov)  
MORE INFORMATION

COMPASS for Windows is part of a larger DOS-based package. Most of the new features that are just appearing in the Windows version already exist in the DOS version. The DOS version of COMPASS has 22 subprograms and hundreds of features. A full description of this software is beyond the scope of this document. If you want information on the full COMPASS package, I can send you a 10 page software description. It also gives step-by-step instructions on how to get COMPASS (and other survey programs) via ftp on the Internet. I also have a three-page review of COMPASS that appeared in British caving magazine, "Compass Points." If you would like a copy of this information, send an e-mail request to:

[lfish@nyx.cs.du.edu](mailto:lfish@nyx.cs.du.edu)

## 1995 NATIONAL CAVE MANAGEMENT SYMPOSIUM XII

October 25-28, 1995  
Spring Mill State Park,  
Mitchell, Indiana

This is the call for papers to be presented at the 1995 National Cave Management Symposium to be held at Spring Mill State Park, Mitchell, Indiana. This event provides an excellent opportunity to share techniques, solutions to problems, and other information related to cave management and protection. The theme for the 1995 NCMS is "Quality Cave Management Involves Everyone," so special emphasis on cooperative efforts by agencies, organizations, and individuals would be appreciated.

The following topics are presented as suggestions for interesting and informative symposium papers: pro-active cave management plans emphasizing successes and problems; Federal Cave Resources Protection Act implementation activities and progress; land trust and private cave management group projects and activities; archaeology, paleontology, geology, hydrology and biology related to cave and resource management; restoration techniques; organizing volunteers for cave management projects; tips for successful cooperative agency/organization projects and case studies; new development in cave gates and other access management techniques; visitation monitoring; impact monitoring; commercial cave trail and lighting advances; cave education programs; endangered species monitoring and protection; transportation and urban construction in karst areas; and water quality issues in karst regions.

The above list is by no means complete. Basically, any presentation that provides useful cave conservation and management information to the symposium attendees should be submitted. In addition to the oral presentation, all papers will be published in the symposium proceedings, which will serve as an excellent resource and reference for attendees and others involved in cave management.

**SYMPOSIUM PAPER TIMELINE:**

- November 1, 1994 Call for Papers announced
- July 15, 1995 Deadline to submit drafts abstracts/presentation proposals
- August 1, 1995 Notification of paper acceptance, draft schedule sent to presenters
- September 1, 1995 Final abstracts due
- September 15, 1995 Program and paper schedule mailed to all pre-registrants
- October 25-28, 1995 Symposium presentations
- December 1, 1995 Deadline for papers to be submitted for inclusion in the proceedings
- July 1, 1996 Proceedings ready for distribution

Each presentation will be allotted 20 minutes with an additional five minutes reserved for questions and answers, unless otherwise pre-arranged. These time limitations will be strictly enforced. The papers will be categorized and presented with similar topics in sessions of three or four presentations. The Session Committee invites and encourages volunteer session coordinators to organize and solicit papers that can be presented together.

In addition to the session presentations, other special presentations and panel discussion are being planned. Your suggestions of topics would be appreciated. There will also be an area available for displays and posters for those wishing to set up an exhibit for the duration of the symposium. Contact the organizing committee for additional details.

For details and questions on this call for papers and presentation topics, contact:

Bruce Bowman	Hank Huffman
Indiana Karst Conservancy	Indiana Dept of Natural Resources
P. O. Box 2401	402 W. Washington St, Room 267
Indianapolis, IN 46206	Indianapolis, IN 46206
(317) 276-4098 (days)	(317) 232-4052 (days)
(317) 53906935 (evenings)	(812) 876-9645 (evenings)

For further details on the symposium, or questions about pre-registration or accommodations, contact:

Keith Dunlap	Larry Mullins
Indiana Karst Conservancy	Hoosier National Forest
P. O. Box 2401	811 Constitution Ave
Indianapolis, IN 46206	Bedford, IN 47421
(317) 242-2505 (days)	(812) 275-5987 (days)
(317) 882-5420 (evenings)	(812) 876-9645 (evenings)

Registration information--

Please note that registration for the symposium is \$100, with a \$20 discount if registered prior to August 31. An additional student discount of 50% is also available. Organizational sponsorships are available for \$200, which includes one registration. The fee includes the symposium program, proceedings, field trip transportation and box lunch, reception, banquet, and other activities. Day passes are also available. Room rates at the park Inn are \$46-\$56; the entire Inn (73 rooms) has been reserved for our use. The park also has a nice campground area with full RV hookups as well as primitive camping; overflow housing is available in nearby Mitchell and Bedford. In addition to outstanding karst features, the park also offers a pioneer village with working gristmill powered by water from one of the caves and one of the few remaining virgin deciduous forests in the Midwest.

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**PRE-REGISTRATION FORM: 1995 NATIONAL CAVE MANAGEMENT SYMPOSIUM**

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Address \_\_\_\_\_

Agency/Organization \_\_\_\_\_ City/St/ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Title \_\_\_\_\_ Phone(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Registration fee:

Until August 31st, 1995: \$80 \_\_\_\_\_ Student \$40 \_\_\_\_\_

After August 31st, 1995: \$100 \_\_\_\_\_ Student \$50 \_\_\_\_\_

Organizational sponsorship \$200 \_\_\_\_\_ (one registration included)

Please make checks payable to the "Indiana Karst Conservancy, NCMS" and mail to:

Indiana Karst Conservancy  
P.O. Box 2401  
Indianapolis, IN 46206-2401

## Calendar Of Events

**Sept. 1-4 TSA Labor Day Project - TBD**

**Sept. 2-4, CRF Labor Day Expedition - Contact Brian Holcomb (505) 266-8485**

**Sept 30-Oct 1, Fitton Cave Survey - Contact Pete Lindsley (214) 727-2497**

**Oct. 20-22, Texas Cavers Reunion, Flat Creek Ranch - Contact Susie Lasko (512) 873-0256**

**Oct. 28-29, Fitton Trip Ark. - Contact John Langevin (817) 924-1919**

**Nov. 23-26 CRF Thanksgiving Expedition at Carlsbad Caverns - Contact Brian Holcomb (505) 266-8485**

**Aug. 3-9, 1996, NSS Convention, Salida, Colorado. Contact Skip Withrow, (303) 693-0997.**