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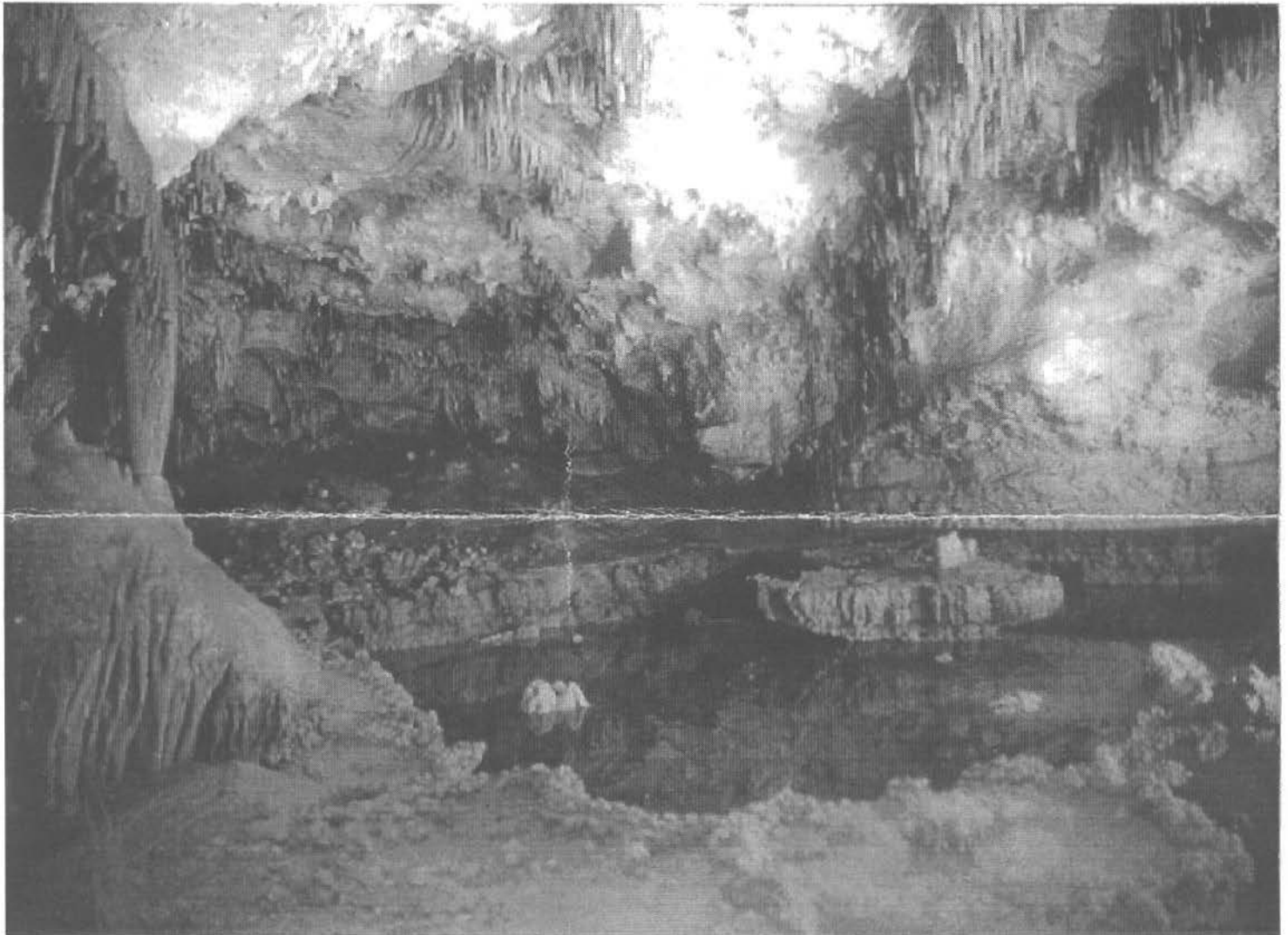
# THE MAVERICK BULL

THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER  
OF THE MAVERICK GROTTO



Volume 9 Issue 12

December 1995



Notice: No December Meeting. See Inside.  
Notice: January Meeting Moved. See Inside.

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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

provide 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:**

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532 Arroyo Dr.  
Fort Worth, TX. 76108  
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**Vice-Chairman:**

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513 Valley Park  
Garland, TX. 75243  
(214)271-8147

**Cave Rescue:** Call collect:

(512) 686-0234

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### Photo Credits

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This month's cover photo is of the Green Lake Room in Endless Cave and was taken by Chad Fenner.  
Page 4 Snow white formations in Endless Cave. Stock photo by Chad Fenner.  
Page 5 Rich Collins, the human Labrador Retriever, taken by Bruce Byles.  
Page 6 The Warclub in Endless Cave, taken by Bruce Byles.

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### Other Credits

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Editor: Chad Fenner  
Typos found by: Ronny "I-found-a-typo" Clark

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

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### Visit Our Web Sight

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The *Maverick Bull* is available as a World Wide Web Sight at: <http://www.why.net/user/caver/bull/>

## Minutes For the November Meeting

### Maverick Grotto, Nov. 14, 1995

The November meeting informally began around 7 p.m. The business portion was called to order at 7:35 by Grotto President Mike Anderson with 21 people in attendance.

#### Visitors:

None.

#### Announcements:

Jay Jorden reported that the D/FW Rites of Fall party went well.

#### Treasurer's Report:

We have \$489 in the bank.

#### Old Business:

The vertical class was completed.

#### New Business:

John Langevin proposed having the next meeting (which isn't till January) at the Botanical Gardens, where he has arranged to use the

auditorium for a multi-media slide show. The proposal was put to a vote, and the aye's had it.

The grotto elections were held, and all the current officers were re-elected. Mike Anderson noted that the grotto constitution institutes a three year limit on the offices of Chairman and Vice-chairman. This is Mike's third year, making it his last.

Russell Hill is continuing his sixth year as grotto librarian. Remember, the grotto library consists of items donated by members. If you feel that a particular book would be a positive addition to our library, feel free to show your generosity, buy it, and donate it to the grotto. The library is for everyone and by everyone. Russell does promise to update it this January.

Butch reported on his new GPS tracker.

#### Officer's reports:

None.

#### Trip Reports:

Mike Anderson went to Fitton.

Ernie went to Colorado Bend.

Sharon and Butch did some extra-curricular vertical practice at Horse-shoe.

The Colorado Bend project seems to be going strong.

Jay Jorden went to Central Texas, saw Cobb Cavern, and talked to the owner. He also went to the Ukraine for some international caving.

The meeting was then closed, and Jimmy Thomas did a presentation on caver rescue.

## Editor's Ramblings

Happy December!

Well can you believe it? We bring to close the ninth year of the *Maverick Bull*, and my second year as editor. I must be doing something wrong, because I'm still having fun doing it. In the past two years I've seen almost every grotto newsletter in Texas change hands, or worse, stop publishing altogether. (Except for Martha at NTSS, but she'll never quit. Deep down inside she loves it.)

Apparently, this job takes its toll on editors. I will admit that doing the *Bull* does wear on Lisa a bit. She

basically loses me to the computer for most of one weekend a month. So on that note, if someone wants to do a guest editor some month, I'll be glad to take a break. Butch has done one issue in each of the last two years, and has promised to do the tenth anniversary issue this October.

This past month I took some of the "guys" from work to Endless. They had been asking lots of questions and hinting that, if the opportunity ever came up, they would love to go with me some time. That was O.K. with me as long as someone was willing to

write the trip report.

It turned out to be a great trip. Special thanks go out to Butch Fralia and John Langevin for the use of some spare helmets and lights.

I understand that Pam Massey took some of the "girls" from her work on a trip. I'm looking forward to the trip report already!

Don't forget, no December meeting, and the January meeting has been moved (see below).

Good caving.

-CF

## READ THIS MEETING ANNOUNCEMENT, NOW!

As you may remember, the Maverick Grotto does not hold a regular meeting in December.

The January meeting will be held, but at a different location. John

Langevin has made arrangements to use the Ft. Worth Botanical Gardens multimedia facilities to present a multimedia slide show. The meeting, as such, will be held at the Ft. Worth

Botanical Gardens in January.

In February we will return to our normal meeting place.

# New Mexico Caving: Hidden & Black Caves

by Dawn Hill

Date: September 22, 1995

Caves: Hidden and Black, Lincoln National Forest New Mexico.

Cavers: Alvis, Dawn, & Wayne Hill

Originally we thought we had a full trip, but by our departure time on Thursday, September 21, everyone had dropped out except the Hills.

We left from Waco as soon as Alvis got off work and hit the familiar trail to New Mexico. (Alvis and Dawn live in New Braunfels now, but Alvis still works in Waco.) A stop was made in Comanche for the traditional "cave bird" meal (Golden Fried Chicken) and a little sleep was caught before heading up Three Mile Hill the next morning. It must have gotten pretty cold up there the night before. Everytime we rubbed against a bush, ice showered down on the windshield. After negotiating the Dragon's Teeth and several ominous-looking mud puddles, we arrived at a good parking place.

Our first cave was Hidden. We had attempted this cave a few years ago

with another husband and wife team, but hadn't gotten to see much of it. The wife had gotten cold feet when it came to making the vertical drop, and the husband opted to stay up top with her. Alvis and I had taken a real quick look and come back out.

This time was different. We all made the drop with no problem and spent about five hours in the cave, including the time it took us to ascend out. We feel certain that nothing was left unseen this time. Sadly, there were signs of widespread vandalism. Since one would have to be vertically proficient to get into this cave, one would have to wonder who would do such a thing? Surely cavers would know better?!

Our next stop was Black Cave. This had been one of our first caves to see years ago, and we wanted to see if we'd missed anything, being so fresh to caving at the time. We got to the entrance and discovered that we'd left the key back at the truck. Alvis volunteered to go back for the key while Pop and I caught a quick nap. It's amazing where you can sleep if you're tired enough!

Black was a lot more decorated than I remembered it being ... and a lot more slick! Black got it's name years ago when there was a fire in the area and black smoke reached the inside of

the cave and covered everything. (At least that's what I'm told.) Most of the formations in Black are either black or yam-colored orange. It's a very pretty cave. The handholds we used turned our gloves black. You could see where the traffic had gone because the "trail" was the only light-colored thing in the cave. The gate seems to have done a good job keeping the cave in good shape. We saw very little vandalism... especially compared to Hidden.

After about three hours, we headed back out of the cave and toward the truck. The weather was perfect. The night was clear, and the stars were so bright and plentiful we could hardly tell one star from another. Camping doesn't get any better than this!

The next day we headed back down Three Mile Hill, got showered at the White City Campground, and made our way east on I-10 for New Braunfels. It had been one of our best and most satisfying trips, and a great way to spend my birthday!

## Another Endless Journey

by: W. Bruce Byles

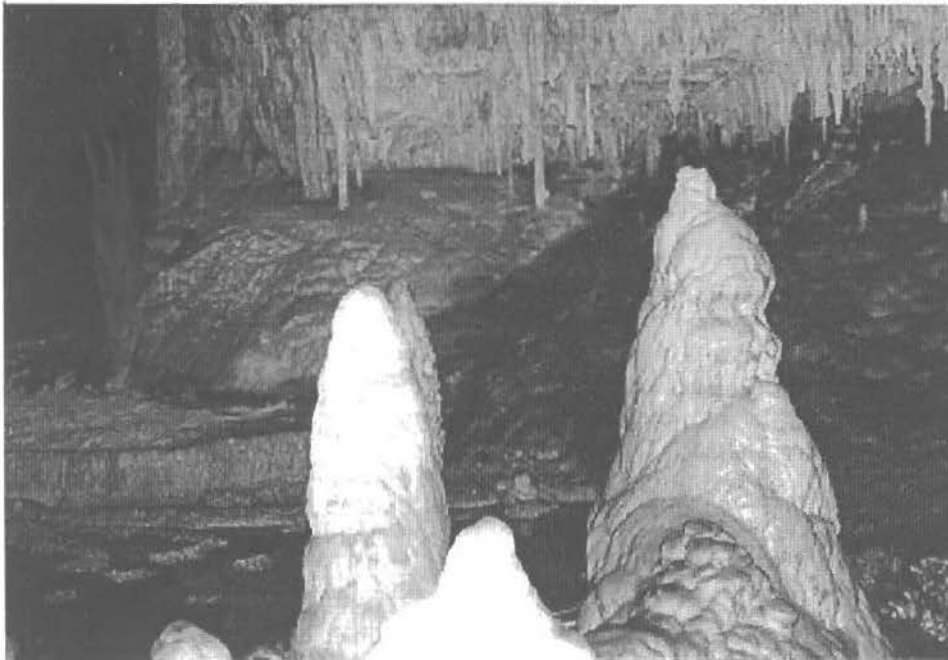
Date: 11 November 1995

Cave: Endless Cave

Cavers: Jim Hunt, Chad Fenner, Dave Winter, Rich Collins, Bruce Byles

*(Ed's note - Jim Hunt, a buddy of mine at work, was fascinated by my caving pictures every time I came back from a trip. He finally talked me into taking him on a beginner horizontal trip so he could experience it himself. Well, one thing led to another and I ended up taking several of the guys from work. I did have one condition, one of them had to write a trip report!)*

I am a first-time caver. Endless was my first cave. I will start this story where every good journey should begin. Not at the cave, itself. No, that would be short-changing the reader a little too much. It is commonly stated



that getting there is half the fun, so I will begin this tale with the endless road trip to Endless cave. Let me explain.

I understand that certain sports have rites of passage associated with them, some tangible, others not. Scuba divers have to overcome fear of water and sea creatures; skydivers have to overcome fear of heights and falling and be willing to jump out of a perfectly good airplane; snake trainers have to be willing to get bitten by venomous adders...child's play. One would think that the rite of passage for caving would be overcoming claustrophobic tendencies and fear of the dark. Not hardly.

Anyone who thinks caving is a sport for wimps should ride in the car with Chad Fenner for seven hours, and have him try out all his worst jokes on you! Think I'm kidding, huh? How's this for a punch line...(I warn you, this is not going to be pretty): "I come to seize your berry, not to praise it!" AAARRRRGGGHHHHH!!! I cringe just to think about it. (Ed's note - Hey, I liked that one!) I could go on, but out of appreciation to any squeamish readers, I'll jump forward to the cave site.

After the invigorating 11-mile drive on the dirt road leading up to the cave site, we arrived at McKittrick Hill at about 8:30 p.m., and began to set up camp. The temperature was rather mild, about 48 F according to my trusty thermometer, but the 20 mile per hour prevailing northerly made it feel like one was standing in the middle of Antarctica in the winter, wearing nothing but skivvies, while drinking a glass of nice, cool lemonade. I know, you northerners (e.g. Dave Winter, Rich Collins) will say 48 is not that cold, regardless of how much the wind is blowing. But, I'm from Louisiana originally, and Texas is the coldest place I've ever been.

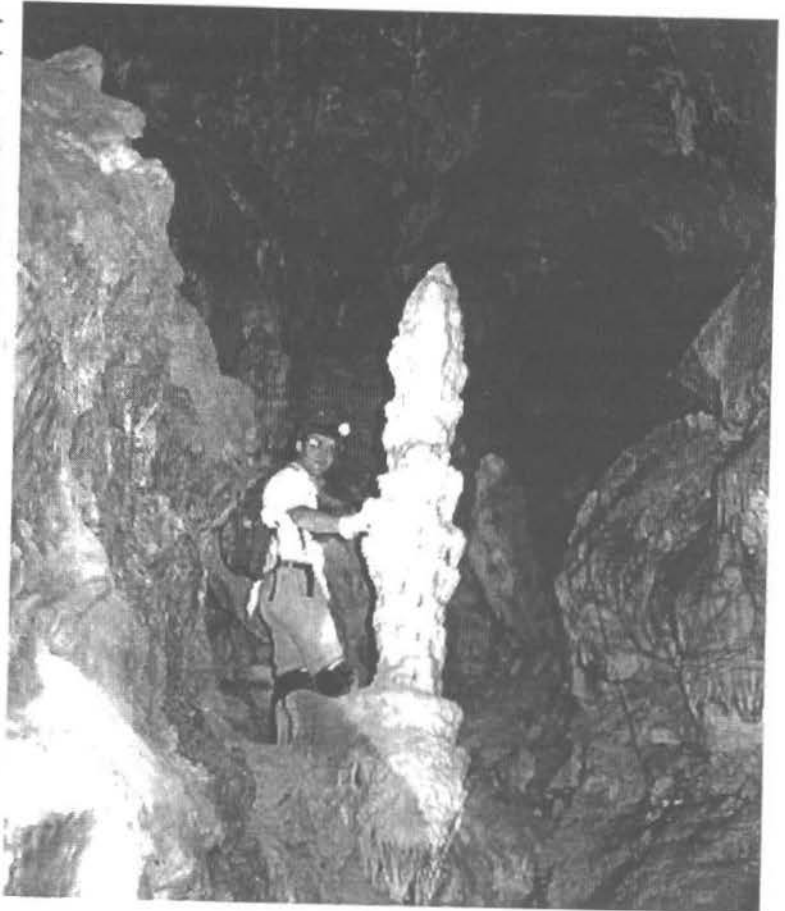
Setting up tents in the wind was truly a challenge. It kind of gives you the same feeling as trying to comb your hair while riding in the back of a pickup truck: it's tough to get the part straight. The tents were finally set up

after a little effort and careful anchoring. It was a brisk, but enjoyable evening, and seeing the cave the next day more than made up for the cold of the evening.

The next morning dawned with a bright sun and an even colder temperature than the night before (37 F by my trusty thermometer).

Chad whipped up some breakfast for everyone, while the rest of us assembled our gear for our journey into the netherworld. At this point, I want to thank all of the people who donated gear for the trip. We really appreciated it! (Ed's note: Thanks to Butch Frailia and John Langevin for the use of their spare helmets and lights.)

I was gearing up, thinking that the temperature inside the cave would be comparable to that on the outside, maybe slightly warmer. Most commercial caves I had been in were about 58-60 F. Chad informed us that the temperature inside a cave is usually about equal to the average year-round temperature of the outside of the cave site. Turns out, this was a good guess. Endless was about 68-70 degrees throughout (once again read from my trusty thermometer), with 100% humidity. Needless to say, the first thing everyone did when we entered the cave was shed the Nanook garb. With the temperature and humidity conditions in the cave, every breath created a wisp of steam, even though the temperature was quite



warm. Another unique phenomenon was that when one exerted oneself, steam could be seen rising from the skin, leaving kind of a dim aura around the individual "letting off steam"...sorry, couldn't resist. We would all look quite ghostly before this trip was over.

After stopping briefly at the "Y" to sign the cave register, we continued to the Mud Crack Room, which gave access to the lower level of Endless. There are two things which, being a first time caver, I had never really thought about until I actually went on this trip. One is how many choices have to be made in deciding which crawl spaces actually lead somewhere; and subsequently finding out where you actually are once you've crawled through one of these spaces. The second thing is crawling itself. Just saying that you have to crawl 100 feet doesn't sound all that difficult...til you have to do it! WWWHHHEEWWW! Enough said. On the way to the Mud Crack Room, we traversed this crevice for what

must have been several hundred feet. Chad said it wasn't very deep. I still (for macho reasons) prefer to think of it as bottomless. Turns out the crevice is about 15 ft. deep and, as we later discovered, had water in the bottom of it.

After reaching the Mud Crack room and wandering through the lower levels (summarized: crawl, crouch, crawl, walk, watch your head, crawl), we located the Gypsum Room. Aptly named, the Gypsum Room ceiling contained significant amounts of...well...white sparkling gypsum. Stalactites and soda straws were scattered throughout, but many were, unfortunately, already broken. We stopped briefly to sign the register in the Gypsum Room, and discovered that Clark and Susie Giles had been there in September.

Continuing onward, we came upon the Green Lake Room. Aptly named as well, this room contained numerous formations, as well as some of the most pristine, clear water I have ever

seen. Chad, Dave and I stopped here to set up for photos, while Rich and Jim explored the area. Rich turned out to be a kind of caving labrador retriever. You could simply point at a hole and say, "Gee, I wonder what's in there...", and off he went to explore.

From there, we set out to find the War Club Room. Our first guess as to its location turned out to be incorrect. But luckily, I've thought up an excuse! You see, the map we were using was reduced to about 1/200th of its original size, thereby making it difficult to see, especially in dim light.

In the process of searching for the War Club Room, we came across this hole at the end of a passageway. Rich agreed to drop into the hole to determine if it looked promising. After he reported that it did look like a promising passageway, we decided to drop our gear through and crawl in the hole right behind him. Well, it turned out that this passageway DID lead somewhere...right back to the Gypsum Room. Tell me again why they call this cave "Endless"? Shrug. Oh well, time for lunch.

Lunch consisted of salami and hard cheese. Very filling, and very good after all the exercise we'd had. If only we'd had some nuts and dried fruit to go with it...the meal would have no doubt rivaled Antoine's best! (Ed's note - Hey, no cracks about the cooking or you'll do it yourself next time!)

After taking a second look at the map, we identified and followed the correct passage to the War Club Room. The most outstanding thing about this room was the stark contrast where the

waterline partitioned the cavern about half way up. The formations were numerous and demanded a certain amount of silent reverence for having taken all the time required to obtain their current forms. The War Clubs themselves looked as if they were much too heavy to grip the ceiling as they did. The stark waterline on the formations helped bring out the highlights in the lower portions of the clubs. Other stalactites, stalagmites, and soda straws were abundant here and helped to lend an eerie feel to the room.

We decided that, instead of backtracking, we would use the Expressway to return to the upper maze and cut across back to the Mud Crack Room to make our exit. This turned out to be a quicker route, but navigating the upper maze was pretty hard on the hands, elbows and knees. The Expressway itself was a relatively easy hike. As we approached the end, a crevice appeared in the center of the main pathway which forced us to stay to the left.

Navigating the upper maze turned out to be a challenge, both because of the high number of available passageways to choose from, and the low ceilings which continually forced us to journey on all fours. We had guessed that the upper maze extending from the Expressway led back to the Mud Crack Room. But, it was pretty hard to tell from the map. We chose to forge ahead in an easterly direction (using my trusty compass as a guide), continually choosing paths tending to lead in that direction. By the time we were about 3/4 of the way to the Mud Crack Room, I was beginning to wonder if our trail was leading us anywhere. The idea of backtracking to the Expressway and once again tackling the lower maze was not too thrilling to me, and I think the rest of the group felt the same way. Tell me one more time why they call this cave "Endless"?

Finally, after what seemed like an eternity, Chad stuck his head through one of the passageways and said, "Hey, this looks familiar!" Those words almost made me forgive Chad for his



bad jokes....almost. (Ed's note - That reminds me, did I tell you the one about the mad scientist who made a clone of himself?)

From the Mud Crack Room, the journey back to the entryway was much easier (i.e. standing up). On the way, Rich noticed that there was water in the bottom of the crevice that I mentioned earlier. The water had the same clarity and greenish tint as that in the Green Lake Room.

We spent the rest of the day exploring the local area looking for the entrances to the other McKittrick Hill caves (careful of the cacti). After that, we all headed into Carlsbad, NM to have dinner at Lucy's. Excellent.

The next day, Chad and Jim decided to make a run back to Ft. Worth (the Cowboys/49er's game started at 3:00), while Rich, Dave and I went to visit Carlsbad Caverns. (Ed's note - we should have stayed in Carlsbad!) The Big Room tour was indescribable. Chad made the analogy that after doing Endless, Carlsbad Caverns is like going to Six Flags. He's right, but I wouldn't have missed caving Endless for anything. Somehow, the formations are appreciated more if you have to work to get to see them.

Announcing a New Book--

## The Caves Of Carta Valley, Edwards And Val Verde Counties, Texas

submitted to Cavers Digest by William R. Elliott

On October 20, 1995, the Texas Speleological Survey published this new volume just in time for the Texas Caver Reunion. Some of the most beautiful and interesting caves of Texas are featured in this work, which was edited by Carl E. Kunath and produced by a staff of seven. The book is also something of an art piece, containing stunning photographs by Carl E. Kunath, Dale Pate, and Pete

Lindsley. The full-color cover photos were scanned at very high resolution and reproduced with the highest precision on a Heidelberg press by Speleo Press (Terry Raines), Austin, Texas. The front cover is of a gorgeous stalactite framed by helictites and angel wings. The back cover is a montage of four colorful photos of large passage, large helictites, and a moonmilk lake. This book will become a classic. Some features of the book:

- \* 109 pages, printed on coated paper with laminated, soft-bound color covers

- \* 5 color and 18 black and white photos of large passages, bizarre soda-straw-stalagmite-helictites, chert pseudostalactite, totem poles, Michel Siffre's "Beyond Time" experiment at Midnight Cave, rappelling scenes, and more

- \* A color, fold-out geologic map of the area by Jerry Atkinson

- \* 2 fold-out maps of Midnight Cave and Big Mutha' Caverns (the latter previously unpublished)

- \* Introductory chapter by Carl E. Kunath and A. Richard Smith, history chapter, geology and geomorphology chapter by A. Richard Smith, cave biology chapter with fauna list by James R. Reddell

- \* Descriptions of 44 caves with 43 cave maps (no locations or owners' names given)

- \* Geological tables and graphs, meteorological data from Blowhole Cave, data on significant bat caves (Rucker Bat, Hutto Bat, Punkin, Dunbar caves), conservation notes, bibliography

- \* \$17 post-paid to U.S. addresses, delivered in a padded envelope. Foreign addresses \$15 U.S. plus actual postage and handling.

- \* Order from William R. Elliott, Editor, Texas Speleological Survey, 12102 Grimsley Drive,

Austin, Texas 78759-3120, U.S.A.

(telephone 512-835-2213,

email welliott@mail.utexas.edu).

## Apologies, Apologies

As my wife can attest to, my organizational skills are well below average.

Such was the case for several recent goof-ups in the area of mailing out the *Maverick Bull*.

The first two goof-ups were relatively minor. They involved address changes for Dave Milhollin and Alvis and Dawn Hill. They each sent me a new address, and I filed it but never updated my records. What's even more embarrassing is that Dawn sent me a trip report with her change of address. Can you believe it? I have had a trip report in my hand for two newsletters and didn't even use it! For sure it's the lead article this month.

For the record, their new addresses are:

R. D. Milhollin  
101 Hosack St. #6  
Arlington, TX 76010

and

Alvis and Dawn Hill  
1521 Daisy Lane  
New Braunfels, TX 78130

The next goof-up is a bit more embarrassing. Apparently, Sharon Darnell paid her dues this year but I never got it entered into my data base. She hasn't gotten a newsletter since the nasty-grams went out in April. I gathered up a copy of each issue since then and mailed them to her.

The last goof-up is by far the worst. This one involved the hand-off of the *Maverick Bull* from Ernest Parker to myself. Somehow, when his subscriber list got imported into my computer, his name was not on the list. It makes sense, I don't mail myself a newsletter, why should he? But I never thought of that, so for two years now, Ernest has not been getting the newsletter that he himself published for many years.

To all four of you, my deepest apologies. I hope that in the future I can do a better job at the administrative side of this job. I am the secretary you know. By definition this job involves filing and stuff.

CF

## Calendar Of Events

Dec. 26-29 Mexpeleo '95 - Contact Oscar Barrones (512) 441-0500

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

### Christmas Party Announcement!

This years D/FW - Maverick Christmas party will be returning to Dave and Barbi's. The details are:

Date/Time: December 16 at 7:30ish

Address: 2909 Warren Cir. Phone:(214) 594-1183

Directions: Take 183 to O'Conner. N on O'Conner to Rochelle. Right on Rochelle for 1/4 mile to a blinking light (Warren Circle). Left on Warren Circle, sixth house on the left.

Other info: Bring a White Elephant gift, a snack or munchy, BYOB, setups, slides, or whatever you think might add to a party atmosphere.