

THE MAVERICK BILL

The Monthly Newsletter Of The Ft. Worth Maverick Grotto

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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, photographs, and other two- and three-dimensional goodies. 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 per year for nonmembers 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. The time is 7 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 (817) 220-7108

or Butch Fralla at (817) 346-2039 for more information.

Library: Support your grotto library. Russell Hill is accepting books, magazines, and videos related to caves and caving for our library. Thanks to Russell for his efforts in transporting the library collection to meetings.

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Photos and Artwork

This month's cover: Funicular at Mexico's Grutas de Garcia, by James Lopez
Page 4: Photos of Christmas Tree Cave, by R. D. Milhollin
Page 5: Classified cave hunting photos, by Wayne Peplinski

Other Credits

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Visit Our Web Site

The Maverick Grotto website is at www.fwst.net/np/maverickgrotto.
Webmaster: maverickgrotto@fwst.net.
Space donated by Fort Worth Star-Telegram Online Services.



December meeting

A party was held at John Broake's house in lieu of a December meeting. No minutes were taken.

January meeting

The next meeting will be Tuesday, January 11, at Smokey's Ribs, 5300 Lancaster, at 7 p.m. First meeting of 2000! Don't miss it if you can! Program unknown at time of printing.

Editor's Blitherings

January 2000. Is it a new millennium or is it not a new millennium? Everybody has an opinion. Me, I'm enjoying the ambiguity while it lasts, because by this time next year, it'll definitely be the 21st century. We'll have LEDs stuck all over our Tyvek suits, and we'll float through caves with our antigravity belts, making 3-D maps with little beeping sonar gadgets. I can't wait! ➡

This column intentionally left blank.

Caver Cryptogram

By Chad Fenner

Can you solve this millennial yet timeless SpeleoPuzzle?

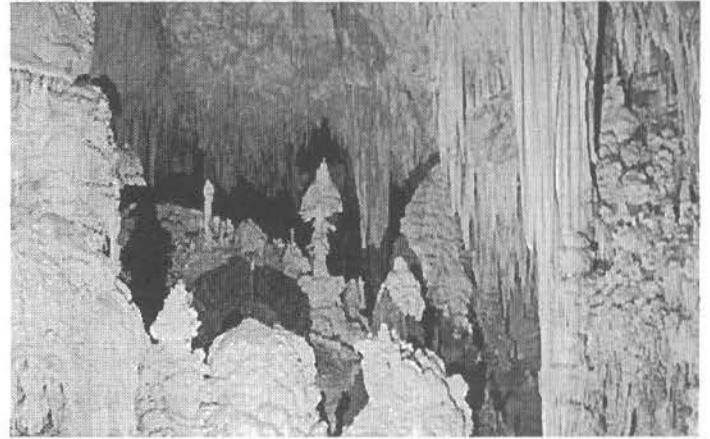
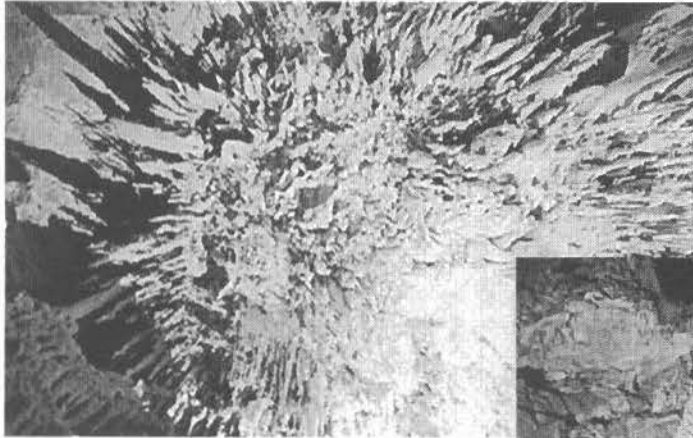
Tnc jteet zw et azpp fteszfi rne ezjb, ehab fteszfi rne ozyencbw,
hfg pbhnb fteszfi rne gtteoczfew.

In cryptograms you are given sentences in which one set of letters is substituted for another. The letters are in their correct order, and spaces are preserved. For example: A BIG CAT could be U NOX QUZ

Hint: Look for common vowels like "e," common double letters like "tt," "ee," "oo," and "ll," and common word endings like "es," "tion," and "ing." Also look for short common two and three letter words like "an," "is," "or," "be," "the," "and," and "but." And of course look for one letter words like "a" and "I." Finally, look at the sentence structure. For example, "and" and "the" would rarely precede a comma or a period.

Christmas Tree Cave

Photos by R. D. Milhollin



Nananananananananananananana...

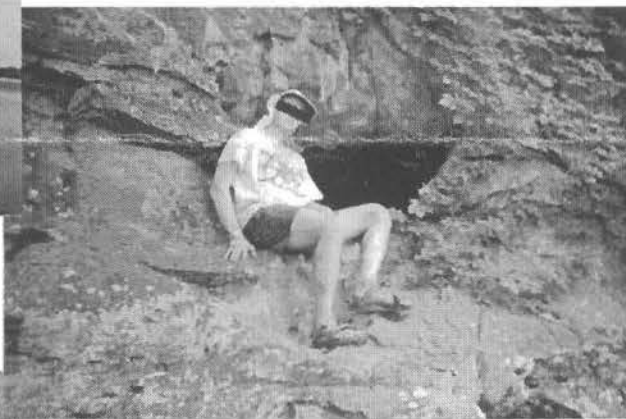
Photos by "Bruce" Wayne Peplinski, text by Ed "Not Robin" Goff

Place names have been changed to protect the innocent.



Wayne and I are playing chess in the drawing room at Stately Wayne Manor. Alfred comes in, says there's a call on the Bat Phone. It's a tip. A cave has been sighted three miles downstream from the Podwunker Bridge on the Blabney River above Rodent's Dominion Reservoir.

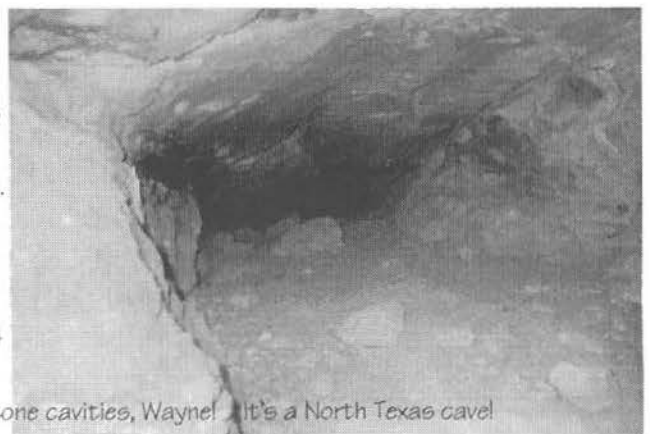
We make for the BatCave, jump in the BatMobile. The turbines whine and we're off. We screech to a halt under the Podwunker Bridge. Wayne presses the button that turns the BatMobile into the BatCanoe.



We slip into the turbid waters of the Blabney River. The turbines whine and we're off. We tear downstream at 300 miles an hour, the BatCanoe's mighty wake uprooting small trees along the banks. The BatCanoe screeches to a halt beneath a high cliff that plunges dizzyingly into the turbid waters of the Blabney River. Up there, Wayne says.



I jump out and scale the cliff using my special BatSandals. Seconds later I reach the beckoning dark mouth of the cave, 2000 feet above the turbid waters far below. Wayne photographs me using the special BatLens which makes me appear to be only yards away. I don the special BatVision goggles and enter the cave. Within inches it becomes very dim and I am unable to see. Removing the goggles I note a sandy floor sprinkled with pebbles stretching away 3 or 4 feet to the end of the passage. Holy sandstone cavities, Wayne! It's a North Texas cave!



C A L E N D A R * O F * E V E N T S

8-9 January 2000, Colorado Bend State Park Project. Contact Terry Holsinger (512) 443-4241, trhli@sprynet.com

13-14 January 2000, Kendall County Cave Survey. Contact Joe Ranzau (210) 289-6839, bigjoe8@hotmail.com

11-12 February 2000, Colorado Bend State Park Project. Contact Terry Holsinger (512) 443-4241, trhli@sprynet.com

25-27 February 2000, Powells Cave Project. Contact Terry Holsinger (512) 443-4241, trhli@sprynet.com

