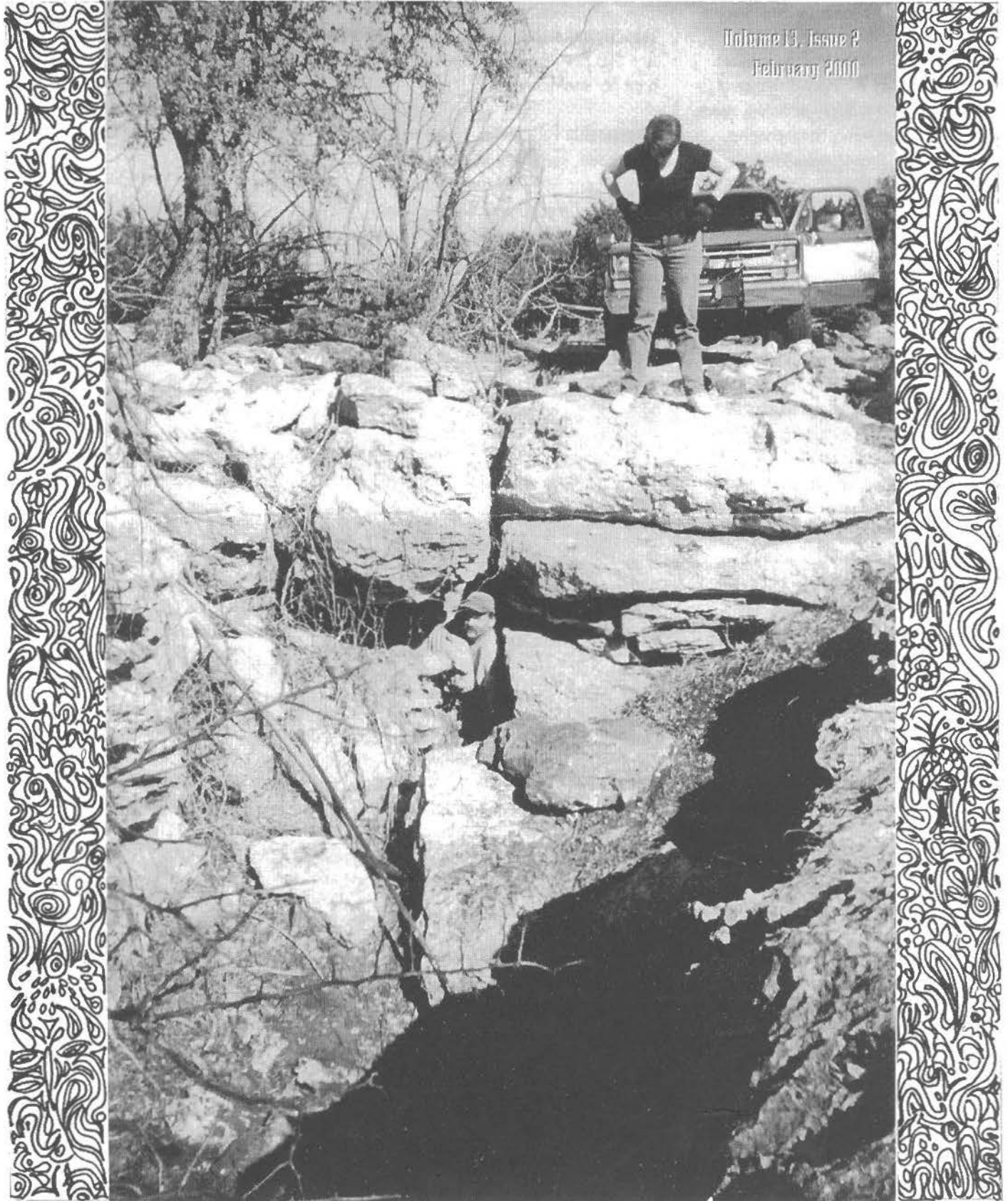


THE MAVERICK B.U.T.

The Monthly Newsletter Of The Ft. Worth Maverick Grotto

Volume 13, Issue 2
February 2000



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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 Fralia 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: Wayne Peplinski and Laura Davis Goff at site of archeological discovery, by Karen Perry
Border art by Laura Davis Goff
Page 4: Human bones from Palo Pinto dig site, by Karen Perry
Page 5: Bone Crack, by Karen Perry
Page 5: Palo Pinto dig crew, by Karen Perry

Other Credits

Mailing list: Sharon Mastbrook

Visit Our Web Site

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



January minutes

The January 11 meeting began at approximately 7 p.m. at Smokey's Ribs and was called to order by incoming Chairman Chad Fenner.

Visitors

Jesus ??? from Tampico, Mexico.

Announcements

Butch announced that Colorado Bend State Park has a new, enthusiastic, cave-friendly superintendent.

It was noted that although tours of Arizona's recently opened Kartchner Caverns are booked into the distant future, space may be available on a first-come, first-served basis.

Reports from Officers

Vice-Chairman: Programs and sug-

gestions for programs are needed for 2000 meetings. Let's plan more grotto trips this year!

Secretary/Editor: Newsletter submissions are needed to keep the Bull going. Last year several pieces were selected for publication in the 1999 *Spelsodigest*: trip reports, photos, artwork, even a poem. You too could be published in a real live book that people buy!

Treasurer: We have \$235 left over from 1999. 2000 dues are due! Grotto report was submitted to the NSG.

Old business

Nobody remembers that far back.

New business

Michael Coulter, David Gers, and Heather Thormahlen were voted in as new members despite pitiful lack of four-wheel drive. Congratulations!

Karen Ferry proposed a tentative grotto-hosted Kendall County caving weekend, approved by a show of hands.

Trip reports

David Gers went to CBSP.

Lid Goff and Wayne Papilinski went to CBSP and dropped an unexplored pit that went nowhere.

Karen Ferry is planning a trip to Blackwater Cave near Boerne.

Program

R. D. Milhollin showed slides from his recent sojourn in Mexico.

February meeting

The next meeting will be Tuesday, February 8, at Smokey's Ribs, 5300 Lancaster, at 7 p.m. Program to be determined. ***

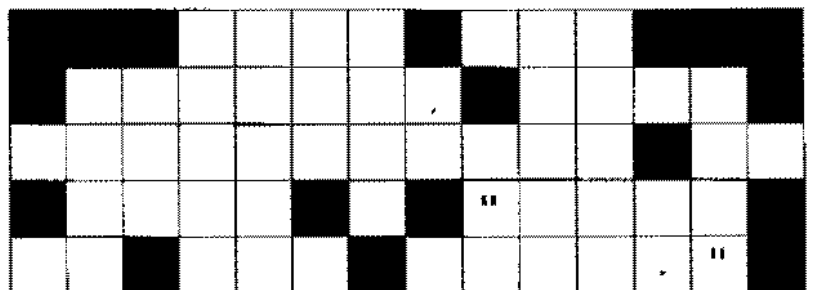
The Puzzled Caver

By Chad Fenner

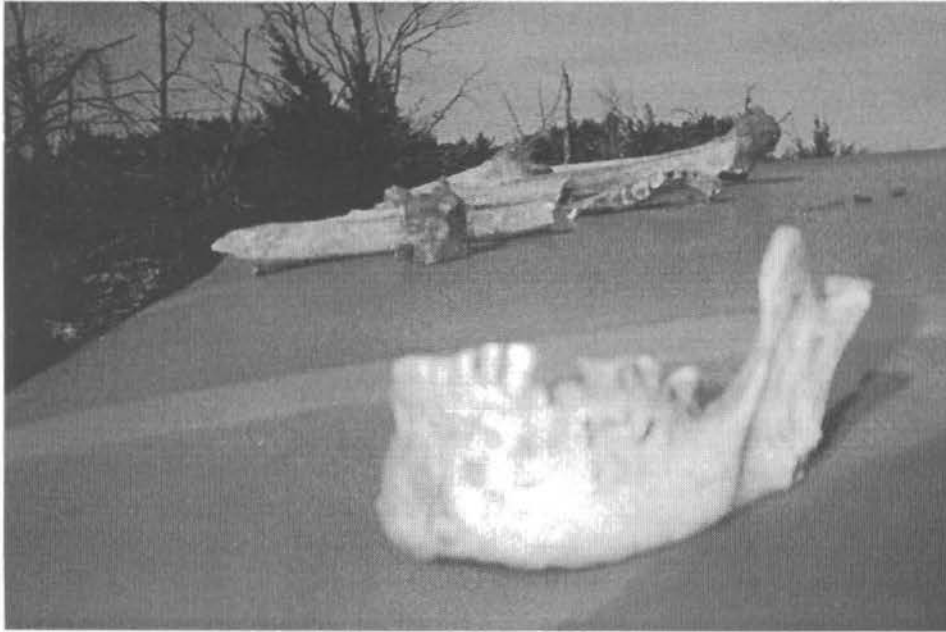
Fallen Phrase

Each letter in the following diagram appears in the correct column, below where it should be, but out of order. Put the letters back in the grid and rebuild the phrase. If you solve it, send your answer to CaverCF@usa.net.

The answer to last month's Caver Cryptogram was: *Our motto is to kill nothing but time, take nothing but pictures, and leave nothing but footprints.*



T H S K
 J T O S A R A
 H O Y U E E P S Y I
 P A N S O N T D A H K O T
 I N U J T G R A A C H V E S



Prehistoric human jaws, vertebra, femurs, and tibia unearthed at Palo Pinto County dig site

Dead people found in hole Or Dem Bones: The Grave Robbers' Saga

By Butch Fralia

January 30, 2000

Cavers: Butch Fralia, Ed Goff,
Laura Davis Goff, Ernie Parker,
Karen Perry, Wayne Peplinski

Last summer, Jim, the landowner out at the infamous Palo Pinto County dig, and I discussed trying to move the digging trips to cooler weather. I called him back in November only to learn that the home phone number I had was disconnected. I called the farm and got referred to a cell phone number. I called the cell phone and he answered. Hearing a lot of noise in the background I asked if he was hanging out in a sports bar or something. He said he was in his

truck, crossing the Chesapeake River Bridge. Duty called and he was adjusting insurance claims on the East Coast where all the rain and Hurricane damage was.

A few weeks back, I got a call and a voice said, "I'm Back!" After I came to my senses and realized it wasn't the poltergeist, I recognized Jim's voice. We discussed the possibility of a dig trip in the next few weeks. I posted e-mail to everyone I knew who had it and got a few responses, enough to set a trip. The arrangements were made and the trip confirmed with the landowner.

It was cold that morning, twenty-two degrees. Everyone but Karen

Perry had trouble getting windshields clean, so it was more like 8:30 a.m. vs. 8 a.m. when we met at the Thurber Smokestack. Karen was getting concerned that we'd canceled and forgotten to tell her. She'd made a few calls and found that we were really on our way.

Arriving on-site, we visited with Jim for a short while before moving to the dig site and beginning the day's task. Things moved right along. If you ever need an entrance dug out be sure to call Ed and Wayne, they hustle! Ernie, Karen, Laura, and myself were hauling buckets of dirt out of the cave about as fast as we could move. The hole proceeded several feet deeper when finally some big rocks appeared. I gave a sigh of relief because one rock that can be removed with a winch amounts to a lot of buckets of dirt.

Ed went into the winch mode while I gathered some location data with my new post-processing GPS. I mapped the pasture boundaries, the fault line, and the sinkhole entrance profile. By the time that was finished, the hole was deeper and people were starting to wind down from the dig. Ed and Wayne climbed into the small pit at the end of the sinkhole trying to get a hint of which way the passage could possibly go. Wayne noticed he could dig some more dirt out down there and extend a possible fissure passage.

In the process of digging, he unearthed a bone and brought it out. He said it was human and it did sort of look that way, except the walls of the bone were awful thin, more bird-



Bone Crack, where the find was made like, but a heck of a big bird. He came out with a couple more bones, one of which looked similar to a human

femur. Remembering all the deer and goat bones I've seen come out of caves, it didn't seem like that big a deal. Well, it wasn't that big a deal until the half-jawbone came out. More comments about "that looks human," and certainly the teeth looked more human than anything else. Whatever it was had one heck of a toothache, because what appeared to be a wisdom tooth had come in from the side, growing into the adjacent tooth. The owner had been removing the rocks we'd dug out of the cave with a small front-loading tractor (great parking area now!). He sort of lost interest in that and got interested in "dem bones!" Everything was going well when it happened. Wayne came out with a whole jawbone that really did look human, except the front teeth were really worn down. Well guess what, it's human! It has begun to cal-

cify into a fossil, so we didn't solve the mystery of what happened to Jimmy Hoffa.

After the excitement wore down, it was time to head for the house. Ernie and I left the rest of the group at the airport cave (somebody else will have to tell that story) and headed out looking for a gas station. Wayne took the small partial jawbone with him.

Wayne took the bone to the Fort Worth Museum of Science and History. They looked it over and referred Wayne to an anthropologist. Wayne contacted said anthropologist. He became very excited and wants to run some tests on the bones to try and determine age and possible heritage. He also wants to see the complete jawbone.

You know, when you miss a dig trip, you literally never know what you'll miss. Isn't this about as exciting as breaking into borehole passage? ***



The dig crew take a break shortly before their discovery.

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

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

Late February 2000, Grotto Trip to McKittrick Hill, New Mexico. Contact Karen Perry rodp@swbell.net

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

Mid April 2000, Grotto Trip to San Luis Potosi, Mexico. Contact Ed Goff (214) 942-6024, egoff@rice.edu

26-30 June 2000, NSS Convention, Elkins, WV. Contact Kelley L. Deem (304) 725-9812, deem@mammoth-geo.com

2-6 July 2000, Small Party Self Rescue Course, Greenbriar County, WV. Contact Joe Ivy (512) 292-1878, joeivy@interserv.com

