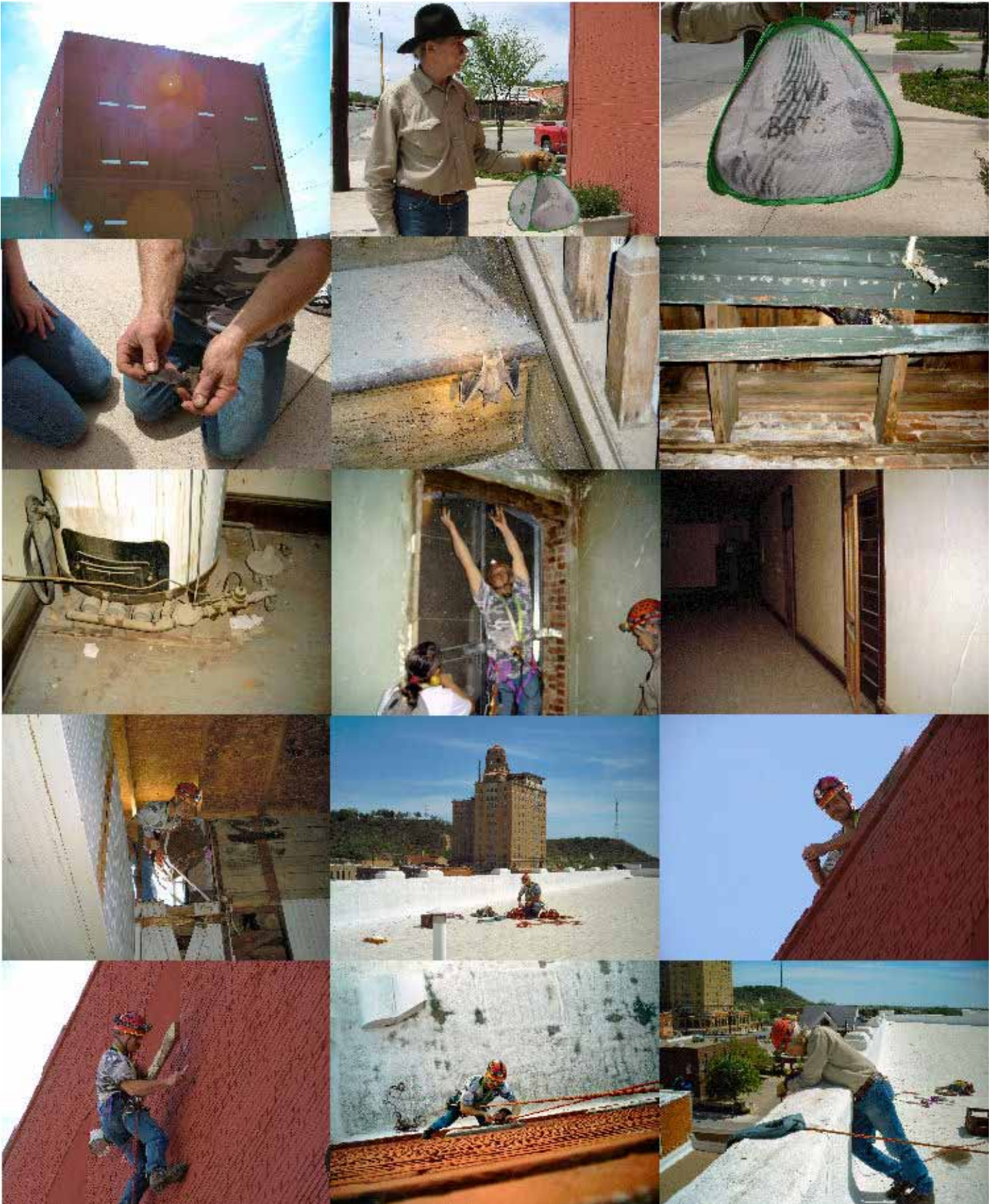


# The Maverick Bull



## Maverick Grotto Information

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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 7:00 p.m. The location will be announced prior to each meeting.

**Library:** Support your Grotto Library. Dennis Welch will be accepting books and magazines on cave-related topics, copies of homemade cave videos, etc. for our library. Bill and Diana will be temporarily bringing and setting up the grotto library on Dennis' behalf.

## Photos & Map Credits

**Cover Photo:** A montage of pictures from the Mineral Wells Bat Warranty Trip. Butch Fralia and Francis Fehribach.

**Page 4, 5, & 6:** Photos from Mexico by Tammy Cox.

**Page 6, 7, 8:** Mineral Wells Photos by Butch Fralia

**Page 9:** Francis Fehribach.

**Back Cover:** 20th Anniversary Logo by Wayne Peplinski.

## Visit Our NSS Award-Winning Web Site!

Butch has done an excellent job at constructing the grotto web site and keeping it up-to-date. You'll find information about getting into caving, trip photos and the PDF version of this newsletter (with color photos!):

[Http://www.maverickgrotto.org](http://www.maverickgrotto.org)

**Cave Rescue:** Call collect: (512) 686-0234

**Next meeting, , May 9th, 2006 7:00 pm**

## Buck N' Loons

3517 South Cooper Street  
Arlington, TX 76015-3410.

## Program:

We'll have a great program this month, be sure to attend the meeting to see it.

### Chair

Butch Fralia  
3412 Walton Ave.  
Fort Worth, TX 76133  
(817) 346-2039  
cavedba@charter.net

### Secretary

Scott Boyd  
509 E Glendale St.  
Crowley, TX 76036  
(817) 297-4427  
sdboyd56@yahoo.com

### Newsletter Editor

Tammy Cox  
237 Gwen St.  
Azle, TX 76020  
(817) 444-0186  
tammy.cox@charter.net

### Vice-Chair

Diana Tomchick  
500 Kingston Dr.  
Irving, TX 75227  
(214) 418-5827  
Dianatomchick@utsouthwestern.edu

### Treasurer

Sharon Mastbrook  
3412 Walton Ave.  
Fort Worth, TX 76133  
(817) 346-2039  
cavedba@charter.net

### Webmaster

Butch Fralia  
3412 Walton Ave.  
Fort Worth, TX 76133  
(817) 346-2039  
cavedba@charter.net

## Caving Calendar

**May 13-14 Temple Cave (AR):** Visit the little-known but beautiful Temple Cave. We'll drive up Thursday and go in Temple Saturday. Just inside the entrance the water is four feet deep and fifty-eight degrees so at least a farmer john wetsuit is required, and a full wetsuit is recommended. The cave has about a half mile of surveyed passage, most of which lies beyond two short sumps. Fortunately, the really pretty part is in a side passage not far inside the cave. The sumps can be free-dove so if anyone wants a more sporting experience, then a dive mask is necessary. This would also absolutely require a full wetsuit. **Contact:** John Langevin (817) 980-0977 [John.Langevin@fortworthgov.org](mailto:John.Langevin@fortworthgov.org)

**May 19-21 Texas Speleological Association Spring Convention (near Fischer):** Hosted at the John Knox Ranch, near Fischer, TX, on the banks of the Blanco River. Come see the talks, salons, vendors, meetings (TSA, TSS, TCMA), TCMA auction. All the usual festivities will take place during this weekend. **Contact:** Kara Dittmer [vicechairman@cavetexas.org](mailto:vicechairman@cavetexas.org) **Info:** <http://www.cavetexas.org/events/tsasc2006> **Also:** [html http://www.johnknoxranch.com/](http://www.johnknoxranch.com/)

**May 20 Texas Speleological Survey Board Meeting (Near Fischer):** Typically held at the TSS offices in Austin at 10:30 a.m., location will be the TSA Convention this time. Open to anyone interested in Texas cave information, its organization and publication. **Contacts:** George Veni (210) 558-4403 [gveni@satx.rr.com](mailto:gveni@satx.rr.com) Jim Kennedy (512) 663-2287 [jkennedy@batcon.org](mailto:jkennedy@batcon.org) Ron Ralph [ronralph@austin.rr.com](mailto:ronralph@austin.rr.com)

**May 27-28 Government Canyon State Natural Area Project:** 20 miles northwest of San Antonio. Activities include survey, exploration, ridge walking, and digging. Participants must enter by 9 am on Saturday, contact in advance if you want to camp and for directions. Caving on Saturday only this month, none on Sunday. **Contacts:** Marvin and Lisa Miller (830) 885-5631 [mllmiller@gvtc.com](mailto:mllmiller@gvtc.com)

**May 27-28 High Guads Restoration Project (Carlsbad, NM):** On-going work amid spectacular scenery in beautiful caves of the Lincoln National Forest. Last weekend of the month, permits often include Three Fingers, Virgin, Pink Dragon, Pink Panther, Hidden, Wonderland, and Black Cave. Activities vary from month to month. **Contacts:** Susan Herpin or Jennifer Foote [highguads@yahoo.com](mailto:highguads@yahoo.com)

**May 26-29 Cave Research Foundation Memorial Day Weekend Carlsbad Restoration Project (Carlsbad, NM):** Restoration and survey in Carlsbad Caverns. Cave Research Foundation projects require prior permission for attendance and have a limit on the number of participants. First slots will be given to people who will be in the cave both Saturday and Sunday. **Contact:**

Barbe Barker [cloudcaver@pvtnetworks.net](mailto:cloudcaver@pvtnetworks.net)

**May 26-29 35<sup>th</sup> Annual Kentucky Speleofest (Munfordville, KY):** Hosted by the Louisville Grotto and held at the Hart County Fairgrounds, located minutes from Mammoth, Crystal Onyx, Kentucky Down Under and Diamond Caverns. Large variety of wild cave tours are available, from easy walking to long, dirty vertical trips. Dave Foster of the American Cave Conservation Association is the featured banquet speaker. **Contact:** Shelly Wolf (812) 597-0275 [cavewolf@hotmail.com](mailto:cavewolf@hotmail.com) **Info:** <http://www.caves.org/grotto/louisvillegrotto>

**May 27-29 Southwest Region Memorial Day Regional (Jemez Mountains, NM):** Similar to a TSA Convention, the SWR regional includes a business meeting for the SWR, but caving trips are also an integral part of the event. **Contact:** Kenny Stabinsky [nmbatty@zianet.com](mailto:nmbatty@zianet.com)

**June 24-25 Manhole Dig (Carlsbad region, NM):** Cavediggers welcome, come see if this will be the next big one. **Contact:** Stephen Fleming [swcaver@warpdriveonline.com](mailto:swcaver@warpdriveonline.com)

**June 24-25 High Guads Restoration Project**

**July 1-9 Fort Stanton Cave Project (Carlsbad, NM):** Join the folks working on extending the length of this cave on BLM lands. **Contact:** John Corcoran III [john\\_j\\_corcoran\\_III@msn.com](mailto:john_j_corcoran_III@msn.com)

**Aug 7-11 NSS Convention (Bellingham, WA).** Held on the campus of beautiful Western Washington University, this convention will be a winner. Register prior to June 15<sup>th</sup> for a \$30 discount. Sign up for various geology field trips and workshops. Caving trips to limestone caves in Washington and British Columbia, and lava tubes in southern Washington can be arranged. Campus dormitory rooms are available if you don't want to camp, but the weather should be fine, cool and very little rain! **Info:** <http://www.nss2006.com/>



## Chairman's Corner

It's already May 2006; I'm not sure what that means other than it got here really fast! It's been a busy month since the last newsletter. Speaking of newsletters, everyone needs a break on occasion so Tammy is caving in the Guads and I'm the guest editor this month. As I'm writing this, there's not a lot of material other than an article that Tammy wrote about going to Mexico so it will be interesting to see how this issue finishes out.

Lest we forget, this is still the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of The Maverick Grotto. After hearing about it for several months, artwork drawn by Wayne Peplinski finally made it my way. Pretty cool and especially since there's no competition, will probably make it as the artwork for the anniversary. Pretty cool slogan "20 years of Bull!" I've got to get all the stuff that's stacked on my scanner stacked somewhere else and get it scanned for the newsletter and maybe the website.

Before last month's meeting at Buck N' Loons, the manager/owner called and asked if we could use the smaller meeting room. There was some big group that wanted to use the large room that night. Since I couldn't guarantee we'd have 50 or so people for the meeting, I told them that would be fine (we'd discussed it anyway since its quieter back there. For whatever reason the big group didn't show up and the duty manager apologized for putting us back there. He gave us some gift certificates to put chips or something on the tables for the membership's next meeting. Nice folks! Actually it was fine except for the pain in getting the stuff for the program set up. We have reservations there for the next few months.

In last month's newsletter, I mentioned that Pete Lindsley and I were taking over for Bill Bentley as webmasters for the TSA website. Since that time, the website has been going through a complete facelift. The website traffic is so low that only one person has even noticed. Check it out at <http://www.cavetexas.org/> and let me know what you think. Like the Maverick website, it's open for new material. There's a lot of information about getting in and out of Mexico for caving trips so it's worth looking there for information if you're planning a trip to Mexico. One line that occurs in several places on the website is "We're all in this cave together!" That has kind of a nice ring to it, don't you think?

Speaking of websites, <http://www.maverickgrotto.org/> website is staying pretty busy, there were 1,520 unique visitors in March and will have over 1,200 for April. In terms of bandwidth, that's thousands of times more active than the TSA website. That's pretty good traffic for a local club but people seem to really love looking at pictures and reading old caving newsletters. It could use some more pictures and other material if you have ideas or suggestions, In all fairness, it looks like I'll have some pretty healthy commercial work going for the next few months so I might not get to it for awhile other than to keep the calendar up to date.

Our friends over at the Cowtown Grotto have had a website for several months but no one to take care of it. One potential webmaster didn't pan out so R.D. Milhollin is

going to start working on the website in addition to doing their newsletter. If you'd like to keep an eye on it as it develops out, it's at <http://www.cowtowngrotto.org/>.

The April Colorado Bend State Park project was held as advertised. At first it seemed it was going to be dedicated to some cleanup around the conference center for Earth Day. As it turned out, there was a pretty good contingent of cavers, Aggies and others so there was caving going on. Keith Heuss, my usual running mate on the trips was working on the cleanup so Milo Marks and I went cave hunting, getting GPS locations and stuff. In the process, Milo went in every hole he could fit in and seemed to have a great time. Keith joined us Sunday morning, we did some more caves, all of which Milo tried to get in. He had a great time noting the bad air in most.

The Colorado Bend Project will probably be under new management this fall. Rafal Kedzierski and Mark Gee should be the primary project managers with a little assistance from Keith Heuss and myself. Hopefully, that's a good thing, we'll see.

I had an interesting experience that I'm going to mention here in case I don't have time to write an article for it. Wayne Peplinski of Bat World Trinity River (<http://www.batworld.org/>) was looking for some help with a bat warranty for an old building in Mineral Wells. It was during the week so not many people were available to help. It turned out that he, Francis Fehribach, Milo Marks and I were available and made the trip. Wayne was able to remove several bats then work on sealing cracks in the mortar where they were getting in. We took the bats over to Bat World where they were given rabies prevention drugs then taken to a sanctuary in the second floor of another old building. All in all, an educational trip.

**Until next month, happy caving!**

## April Meeting Minutes

By Sharon Mastbrook

The minutes for the 04/11/2006 meeting taken by Sharon Mastbrook due to Scott Boyd working :

The Maverick Grotto met April 11, 2006, at Buck N' Loons, on S. Cooper St. in Arlington.

Visitor: Cynthia Hall

Program: Don Selby had slide show from his trip to Jerry Fant's project "Proyecto Espeleologico Sierra Oxmolon" in Mexico.

Reports from Officers:

Chairman: Butch Fralia reminded us that this year is the 20th anniversary of the grotto. He asked the members to

come up with some ideas for a celebration this fall. He also reminded everyone that it is time to pay dues.

Treasurer: Sharon Mastbrook reported that there is \$1,104.84 in the checking account, \$ 107.00 in petty cash for a total of \$1, 211.84. There are still a small handful of people that need to send in their dues.

Old Business: We will meet in March at Buck N' Loons May 9, 2006 and June 13, 2006. We discussed possible locations for our 20th Anniversary Party. Honey Creek, Palo Pinto, and M&W Ranch were discussed as locations we would like to consider.

New Business:

Trip reports and trip announcements:

\* Jester Cave - Bill Steele and Diana Tomchick took Christine and her son on a cave trip.

\* CBSP - Butch gave an update about the project. Discussed the change of leadership for the project. Discussed the Memorandum of Agreement and the purpose of CBSP as it pertains to cavers.

\* TSA Spring Convention - May 21, 2006. TSS will have a new book for sale at convention. An auction may occur. The Barb McCloud DVD may not be ready for convention. They are still working out the details on getting the DVD mass produced.

## A Trip to Remember

By Tammy Cox

Bustamante Feb 17-20<sup>th</sup>, 2006

Cave: Gruta del Palmito

Cavers: RD Milhollin, Ray Ecklund, Lex Cox III and Tammy Cox

I remember reading Bill Steele's trip report last year with envy thinking I would never get to go to a cave in Mexico. I don't speak Spanish, have no idea how to get through customs and I don't know where any of the caves are. But as luck would have it Lex Jr. got a call from RD on Sunday, Feb. 12<sup>th</sup> asking if we wanted to go on the annual Bustamante restoration trip. It turned out that Lex Jr. was not able to go due to work so Lex III and I jumped at the chance.

We met RD at his house early Friday morning to load up his truck and his dog Mac. Then we drove over to Ray's house to pick him up. Ray is a friend of RD's and is a new caver. This was his second caving trip, what a great experience for your 2<sup>nd</sup> trip. Finally we were loaded and ready to go.

Our first stop was planned for lunch in San Antonio. We had no problems getting there and stopped at Schlitzkys for sandwiches.

It must be a good place to stop because we ran into a group of Austin cavers that said they always stop there on their way to Bustamante. RD had tied Mac (the dog) up to a tree while we were eating lunch and when we were done he went out to check on him and discovered he had killed a mouse. This was pretty amazing since he was tied to a tree and had a limited area he could move around in. Then it was back in the truck and off to Laredo for our next stop.

We arrived at Laredo and crossed at Nuevo Laredo with no problems. There wasn't a line inside and our visas didn't take very long. RD had to stand in line for the vehicle permit but it wasn't too bad.

Our next adventure was at a checkpoint. Now this was my first trip to Mexico so I didn't know what to expect. The checkpoints in the interior of Mexico are enforced by men with guns. Here is how it went. We pulled up to an armed guard, when I say armed I mean a big gun that looked like an A-K 47 or something and five or six other guards standing around with the same big guns and one across the street in a barricade ready to shoot. Oh my gosh, I was scared to death. The guard and RD spoke a little Spanish back and forth, RD showed him some paperwork and mentioned Bustamante and Grutas, the only words I understood, and then we were allowed to pass. Lex and I were relieved that we made it through alive. How exciting!

Later there was one more checkpoint with guards and guns. At this one RD had to push a round button thing and it would either light up green for pass or red for pull over and we search you. Thankfully it was green and we were on our way again. At that check point Lex noticed a burned van in the ditch full of bullet holes. He wanted to take a picture but didn't dare get his camera out.

The rest of our trip was uneventful and we made it to Bustamante around 8:00 pm. The town is at the base of some incredible mountains that take your breath away. It is far enough from the border that most of the locals speak very little English. This was a little difficult for Lex and me since neither of us speak very



RD, Ray and Lex at the registration area getting water ready to transport to the cave

much Spanish. He remembered some of his Spanish 1 and Spanish 2 from High School; I should have helped him more with his homework. We managed to order dinner that night and breakfast the next morning with help from RD. After a day or so we could even order by ourselves. That was a good feeling.

Saturday morning after breakfast we drove up to the registration area held at the ticket office at the parking lot for the cave. Now that the sun was up I could really see how beautiful the mountains were. There were a number of boy scouts there to help clean along with all the Texas cavers. Several caver trucks ran people up the mountain but we did see some people hiking up and what a hike it was. We stopped for a few photos on the way up and took our time looking down at the town. It was amazing.



**Boy Scouts and leaders at the registration area**

The main entrance room was spectacular; it reminded me of Carlsbad Cavern. It was lit up with lights strung all around and was full of large formations, rim stone dams and anything you could think of. Ray worked inside on the lights, Lex and I worked deep in the cave cleaning up graffiti and RD worked outside on a large area of graffiti.



**Pete Strickland working the belay at the Birthday Passage**

After a day of work we all headed back to the Hotel Ancira which is where we were staying. The weather turned out cold that weekend and the hotel didn't have any heat. I was very cold and finally decided to plug in my blow-dryer and leave it on low all night for some heat. It seemed to work ok and I thought it was warmer even if it wasn't.



**Lex III at the bottom of the Birthday Passage**

It wasn't all work. On Sunday there were several different trips planned around town and in the cave. The four of us along with about twelve others decided to go with Pete Strickland to the climb up to the Birthday Passage. This was about a sixty foot hand over hand climb up a flowstone wall with someone belaying at the top for safety. Well at first look I thought no way, but after Lex and I watched several people do it safely we decided to give it a try. By this time Ray and RD were at the top and working the belay rope. Lex climbed up with no problem. I think some of the time I was climbing up they were just pulling me up. Thanks to everyone at the top for getting all of us up safely.

Once we all made it up the view was amazing. Lex and Ray took several pictures including Pete doing the belay job. Ray had made friends with Orion Knox the day before and he let Ray bor



**Tammy taking a break beyond the Birthday Passage**

his flashes (slaves) so he and Lex could take some really good shots and they did. From this point on the cave was even more amazing than what we had already seen. There was a gypsum room full of helictites and every kind of soda straw formations you could think of.



**Cave Dave McClung looking at the pretties past the Birthday Passage**

Once we were out of the cave we headed back to town for the banquet at the Hotel Ancira. We were late arriving so we just went in our dirty caving clothes but no one cared and they had even saved a bunch of food for us and had our door prizes waiting.

Monday morning we did a tour at the mesal plant at the end of town on our way out. Mescal is similar to tequila and always has the worm in the bottom of the bottle. We were surprised to see they way they make everything without any modern machines.

The trip home went smoothly, no problems. We had a great time and hope to go again next year.

### **Bat Warranty – Mineral Wells, Texas**

By Butch Fralia

Late in March, Wayne Peplinski sent out an e-mail looking for some help April 3, 2006, that was a Monday and it was on short notice to boot. I didn't have anything that had to be done that day and decided to see what it was all about. As it turned out, Francis Fehribach and Milo Marks were able to help also.

So what's a bat warranty you ask? Wayne is the director of the Trinity River Bat World Sanctuary and apparently had been asked (somewhere back in time) to work on removing bats from the upper unused floors from an old apartment/hotel building in Mineral Wells. The bats had been removed and the building sealed to prevent re-entry but they were getting back in somehow. The owners didn't mind the bats but the smell of bat guano wasn't their favorite thing so they called in their warranty.

I drove over to Wayne's house where he loaded all kinds of strange stuff into my truck. We were soon joined by Francis and off we went to Mineral Wells in my truck (better mileage than Wayne's Durango). We met Milo, located the building and

got the quest underway.

Wayne got the key from the owners so we could enter through a stairwell entrance. The building was probably built around the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, perhaps a little before. It might still be in use if it weren't for all the building codes regarding apartments and hotels these days. I never understood which it was but there were kitchens in what looked like small apartments so it could have been either. There wasn't any electricity in the upper floors so the building was very cave like with virtual total darkness. I say virtual because there were small cracks here and there, letting in tiny amounts of light.



**Is it an apartment or hotel?**

On the way up to the second floor was a bat hanging from a stair step. It was obviously dead and dehydrated yet still there. Wayne said it was there the last time he was in the building. Arriving on the second floor, equipped with our own light-



**Francis Fehribach taking notes on the Bat Warranty.**

ing, we started lighting the place up and looking for bats. It was sort of like something from the twilight zone with lots of twi and

little light. We took a step back in time where things were very different from what we know today. I was impressed by the ancient water heater that was located in a corner of the main hallway. It looked like something added later as an afterthought rather than part of the original architecture. It was gas fired with an impressive burner array. Maybe they were afraid it would catch on fire if hid away in the heater closet of today.



**At least they were able to stay clean before they turned the bathtub over!**

I don't know about you but I see a place like this and I think of the people who lived there. Who were they, what are their stories, and what was their life like. A place like that is haunted by the ghost of lives long past. Their names probably never saw the inside of a history book but they part of our history and heritage still.



**Bats like to "hang out" in the cracks above the window sills!**

We started out in a long hallway with lots of doors to either side. It didn't take long until we found our first bat, hang-

ing along the wall in the hallway. We noted the spot and moved on and finally found a roost in the window of a side room. We went on up to the third floor where we didn't find any bats but the roof access was there. We went on up to the roof where Wayne rigged a standard issue cover climbing rope to drop down the side of the building to seal cracks in the mortar.

The building is located along the east bound side of Highway 180 where it splits, running through the main part of Mineral Wells. The view was pretty neat allowing for some pretty interesting pictures of the old Baker Hotel and Crazy Water Hotel. I'm not sure of the status of the Crazy Water but the Baker Hotel was open as an assisted living center for the elderly until a few years ago. Some problem came up about the sprinkler system (or lack of one) and the hotel was closed. With a number of broken windows, it's probably become a bat haven in its own right.

While I was noting all this, Wayne was happily hanging



**The Baker Hotel—Mineral Wells, from the roof of the Bat Warranty building.**

along the side of the building with Milo dropping a bucket of sealing solution down to him on another rope. He patched and sealed, moved to another location and repeated the process again. Francis had gone back down and was happily taking pictures of Wayne working on the building while I was happily leaning over the side taking pictures from another angle. Sort of like who's that down there saying who's that up there while I'm up here saying who's that down there. Figure out how to change that to include taking pictures!

When Wayne made his way back to the top, he noted the deterioration of the mortar with time and decided this would probably be a periodic affair. Makes you wonder about standing along side the building wondering if you might get hit by a falling brick.

Finally we got back into the building, carefully making sure the roof access was locked down and Wayne started collecting bats. They like to get in cracks above the windows so they weren't easily accessible. Unfortunately not all of them could be rescued meaning Wayne would have to make trip back out the next day.



Out of the building on the sidewalk, local business owners came over to see what we were doing and look at the small collection of bats. They were impressed, and didn't indicate any fear of the bats, only concern for their welfare. Maybe that's a statement that Bat World is doing a good job of public education out there.

We left the site and meandered our way through town



**Wayne Peplinski shows the building owners bats that he's removed from the building.**

over to Bat World. We met Amanda Lollar and watched her give the bats some anti rabies medication. Apparently she also shelters small dogs because there was a collection of those around also. We took a quick tour of the facility, saw where the Fruit Bat exhibit was but didn't see any bats because they were all in repose for the day. For large bats, they can hide well in the leaves. We learned a little bit about how they are taken care of, how much they eat and other interesting things.



**Bat Sanctuary using the second floor of an old building in Mineral Wells, Texas.**

Our next stop was to the bat sanctuary or bat roost where the second floor of another old building has been established as a bat roost. The bats Wayne had caught were release into a group of 40,000 or so. Wayne and Francis donned rain gear and went into the roosting area. Having had the experience in real bat caves, I opted to pass on the experience as did Milo. It was still impressive looking through the screen at all the bats. To prevent the guano from damaging the floor, plastic sheeting is spread all over to protect it. It does have that fine aroma of bat guano permeating everything so it's doubtful that any future developer will try to find another use for the building.

After all the bat business was attended, I offered to take everyone up to Manley's Water Cave, about 15 miles north of Mineral Wells. I needed to get an accurate GPS location on the cave. I'd taken one in years past but with an older GPS that had its problems and the location plotted out somewhere in Oklahoma. We drove to the cave, everyone getting their chance to see the entrance, be entertained by a few tales about it. I got the GPS data recorded and we got back to the road pretty quickly. At one time cavers supposedly had carte blanche access to the cave but I don't know that to be a fact any longer. I didn't want to find out the hard way.

Milo headed south to return home while Wayne, Francis and I headed back toward Fort Worth. I was going to show them a short cut back to Fort Worth but it was a short cut back to my house in SW Fort Worth and didn't save any driving distance or time back to Wayne's house in NW Fort Worth. Wayne knows the area pretty well and showed me another short cut back to the Jacksboro Highway saving about 15 miles driving distance over the way I was going.

It was an interesting and educational trip all in all. I heard from Wayne afterward that he'd returned to the building later and found that if anything, there were even more bats than before. He's going to take a different tact and see about putting up screening over any other entrances he can locate where the bats can get out but not back in. Seems that the stuff you get for your flowerbeds to put down where the weeds can't grow through works pretty well for bats.

**AFTERNOTE:** You're probably aware there are a lot of bats in Tarrant County, especially in downtown Fort Worth. They like the parking garages and deteriorating buildings where there are entrances albeit small they can get in. You probably remember the bat rescue in the Kress Building or in years past the incident where dying bats were falling over an area of downtown. Some industrious folks decided the best way to clear bats was through the use of insecticide creating a rather memorable event. They later received large fines for that.

There's activity underway to install bat houses around the city. There are already bat houses at the Fort Worth Zoo, and soon there should be some under the North Main Street bridge leading across the Trinity River out of downtown. Wayne attended a meeting where TXDOT said they'd install the bat houses but would only pay \$48,000 to buy them. That was a shock since they hadn't been asked to buy them, only permission to put them under the bridge.

Perhaps within a few years, Fort Worth will have its own bat flight that will become a tourist attraction like the Congress Street bridge flight in Austin.



Possible 20th Year Anniversary Logo by Wayne Peplinski.

**Maverick Grotto  
c/o Tammy Cox  
237 Gwen St.  
Azle, TX 76020**