

# The Maverick Bull



The Newsletter of the Maverick Grotto    Volume 19    Issue 8    August, 2006

## 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:** Arkansas cave trip photos by Tammy Cox, top left: Bill Tucker, right: Lex Cox, bottom from left to right: Kendall Coulson, Ed Malcom, Milo Marks and Cynthia Hall

**Page 4:** Photo of Cynthia Hall on her first vertical trip taken by Ed Malcom

**Pages 6-9:** Arkansas cave photos taken by Ed Malcom and Tammy Cox

**Back Cover:** Photo of Lex Cox taken by Tammy Cox

**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

### Cave Emergency:

FOR A LIFE THREATENING EMERGENCY IN TEXAS DIAL 911. FOR CAVE ASSISTANCE START BY CALLING THE CLOSEST NUMBER:

**BEXAR:** 210-326-1576 **COLLIN:** 214-202-6611

**HAYS:** 512-393-9054 **KENDALL:** 830-537-6111

**SUTTON:** 315-387-3424 **TRAVIS:** 512-663-2287

**PARKER:** 817 657-5780

**Next meeting: August 8th, 2006 7:00 pm**

**Buck N' Loons** 3517 South Cooper Street  
Arlington, TX 76015-3410.

**Program:** The program for the August Maverick Grotto meeting will be on the Wakulla Springs Project, a film shot in the late 1980s. Wakulla Springs, near Tallahassee, Florida, is considered to be the largest spring in the United States. Many feel that it is the fabled Fountain of Youth sought by Spanish explorer Ponce de Leon. The film is about the first big push of Wakulla Springs, which used cutting edge scuba technology, including an underwater decompression chamber.

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## Caving Calendar

**Aug 7-11 NSS Convention (Bellingham, WA).** Held on the campus of beautiful Western Washington University, this convention will be a winner. 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/>

**Aug 18-20 Third Annual EspeleoCoahuila 2006 (Saltillo, Coahuila, Mexico):** Organized by the Asociación Coahuilense de Espeleología, AC (ACEAC). A variety of themes will be covered relating to cave exploration and rescue not only in Coahuila, but also in other parts of Mexico. Registration: 350 pesos (about \$32). **Contacts:** Monica Ponce [mgpg7@yahoo.com](mailto:mgpg7@yahoo.com) Peter Sprouse [petersprouse@yahoo.com](mailto:petersprouse@yahoo.com) **Info:** <http://www.oztotl.com/ps/EC/> (English) and <http://scintilena.clarence.com/permalink/219095.html> (Spanish).

**Aug 26-27 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)

**Sept 02-04 Southwest Region Labor Day Regional (Sacramento Mtns., NM):** The scenic limestone Sacramento Mountains are located east and southeast of Alamogordo. Cave trips and conservation projects in the region will be available. **Contact:** Kenny Stabinsky [nmbatty@zianet.com](mailto:nmbatty@zianet.com)

**Sept 16-17 Manhole Dig (Carlsbad region, NM):** Cave-diggers welcome, come see if this will be the next big one. **Contact:** Stephen Fleming [swcaver@warpedriveonline.com](mailto:swcaver@warpedriveonline.com)

**Sept 23-24 High Guads Restoration Project (Carlsbad, NM)**

**Oct 07-14 Fort Stanton Cave Project (Ruidoso, NM):** Join the folks working on extending the length of this cave on BLM lands. Weekends will be devoted to installing the new entrance into the Mud Turtle Passage, weekday trips will be scientific surveys. See article in this month's newsletter for more details of project activities. **Contact:** John Corcoran III [john\\_j\\_corcoran\\_III@msn.com](mailto:john_j_corcoran_III@msn.com)

**Oct 20-22 2006 Texas Cavers' Reunion (Honey Creek Ranch, near Spring Branch):** Don't miss the biggest caving party of the year in Texas; typical attendance is around 350 people. Fun events include shopping for caving gear, speleolympics, clothing-optional hot tub, live music, Saturday night banquet, ramen-noodle wrestling and more. Trips into the

Trips into the longest surveyed cave in Texas will be available, check the web site for more details. **Info:** <http://www.oztotl.com/tcr>

**Oct 28-29 High Guads Restoration Project (Carlsbad, NM)**

**Nov 18-26 Proyecto Espeleológico Sierra Oxmolon (San Luis Potosí, México):** Annual Thanksgiving caving/surveying/tourist trip to the Sierra Madre Oriental, west of Aquismón. Trip suited for beginners and veterans alike. **Contact:** Jerry Fant (512) 970-0456 [Jerry.Fant@esotericvision.com](mailto:Jerry.Fant@esotericvision.com) **Info:** [www.pesoproject.esotericvision.com](http://www.pesoproject.esotericvision.com)

**Dec 22-Jan 1 Purificación Caving Trip (Tamaulipas & Nuevo León, México):** Annual end-of-year trip to the mountains of Old Mexico, dates are approximate. The search to go deep continues. **Contacts:** Bill Steele ([speleosteel@comcast.net](mailto:speleosteel@comcast.net)) Diana Tomchick (214) 418-5827 [diana.tomchick@utsouthwestern.edu](mailto:diana.tomchick@utsouthwestern.edu)

## July 2006 Meeting Minutes

The Maverick Grotto met July 11th at Buck N' Loons, on S. Cooper St. in Arlington. There were 11 members and 2 visitors present.

**Program:** A slide show from the NSS Audio/Visual catalog titled "Western Oklahoma Gypsum Caves".

**Reports from Officers:**

**Chairman:** Butch Fralia reminded us of the grotto's 20th anniversary, and asked for help with that and newsletter articles also. He also mentioned that he put a Google map for the meeting site on the Maverick Grotto Website. He also added another level of spam filtering to the grotto officers' email addresses and briefly explained how it worked.

**Treasurer:** Sharon reported that the grotto has \$1,159.85 in the checking account, \$5.55 in petty cash for a total of \$1,065.40.

**Non-trip announcements:** Bill Steele said that the TCMA is celebrating their 20th anniversary this year. They are having a t-shirt design contest that ends July 31st. He invited anyone that wanted to enter the contest to help design a commemorative t-shirt for the TCMA.

**Old Business:** John Crosswait has suggested we try Dickey's BBQ on Ballpark Way in Arlington. Butch asked for someone to check out the particulars of meeting at Dickey's and let him know.

**New Business:** Cynthia Hall applied for membership and was voted in unanimously as a new member. Butch brought us up-to-date on the status of the volunteer caving project at Colorado Bend State Park.

Grotto fund-raiser: Scott Boyd donated a "carabineer pen" to the grotto for a fund-raiser. A drawing was held, Lex Cox won the pen, and \$10 was raised for the grotto.

## New Member Profile

My name is Cynthia Hall. I'm married to Jerry Hall, have 2 children (both married), 3 grandchildren and 1 grandbaby due in October. For the last 10 years I've worked for a State Farm Agent as a Sales Rep. I also do wedding/party planning and decorating and Calligraphy. My hobbies include hanging out with Jerry or reading, gardening, playing with the grandchildren and watching movies.



Cynthia Hall rappelling into the lower section of Cave Mountain in Arkansas.

I started caving 3 years ago with Tammy when she took me to Airman's in Austin. When I finally recovered from that first caving trip (it took about 2 weeks for the soreness and bruises to abate) I decided that it was a lot of fun and started following Tammy around to other caves. I enjoy the physical aspects of caving as well as the beauty and uniqueness of the caves. I find it fascinating that we cavers see parts of the country that not everyone will get to see and enjoy. I've just learned to rappel which was really cool and I can't wait to have the opportunity to do more.

## Announcements

The **Colorado Bend State Park TSA Volunteer project** is under new management. The project leader is Rafal Kedzierski assisted by Mark Gee, Butch Fralia and Keith Heuss. This is an especially good event for beginning caver, more cavers in Texas have gotten their start at CBSP than any other property. We'll find you something to do within your level of experience.

There will be six trips to the park and they are open to all interested cavers. You will be assigned a task with a group of cavers. It's a great opportunity to learn new stuff or just do the stuff you like to do.

Trip Dates (the first day indicates Friday night when most everyone arrives):

October 13-15, 2006

November 10-12, 2006

December - NO TRIP due to Christmas Party conflicts

January 12-14, 2007

February 9-11, 2007

March 9-11, 2007

April 13-15, 2007

For more information e-mail: [cbps@maverickgrotto.org](mailto:cbps@maverickgrotto.org)



The 2006 convention will be hosted at beautiful Western Washington University. The university is located between Puget Sound and the Cascade Mountains, just outside of downtown Bellingham. Built with nature and beauty in mind this will be a stunning backdrop for the 2006 NSS Convention. Situated between Seattle, Washington and Vancouver, British Columbia, the spectacular natural environment of this region stretches from the San Juan Islands to Mt. Baker. Bellingham area and community offers recreational experiences from the relaxing to the exhilarating.

Please visit the new website at [www.nss2006.org](http://www.nss2006.org) Chairman: Michael McCormack, Cascade Grotto, email - [michmcco@exchange.microsoft.com](mailto:michmcco@exchange.microsoft.com)

## Chariman's Corner

I want to offer my deepest condolences to Sharon Welch, whose mother recently passed away after a long battle with cancer. Dennis recently lost his father. My parents are both long gone and I know it takes some getting used to.

There was a nice turn out at the July meeting which was refreshing after the three people (including myself) June meeting. It was cool to see Dale Ellison make the meeting so soon after his stroke. Mark and Pam Porter were there, charter members and good friends. Maybe the idea of listening to me give the program scared everyone one off in June. I know some folks will be going to the NSS convention so will be out for the August meeting. Hopefully everyone not in Washington State will come join us.

We're running out of time to do T-Shirts and set up the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary party. The most opportune times to do a party is the last weekend of September or first weekend of October or skip to the last/first weekends of October and November. Otherwise we're in conflict with a number of fall caving events. CBSP starts up the second weekend of October and TCR the third weekend. Anybody got any ideas? Or do we just pass our 20<sup>th</sup> with a toast of cheap beer and the October or November meeting.

Speaking of TCR, we're going back to Honey Creek this year. There will be the usual festivities of vendors, meetings, parties AND trips to Honey Creek cave. It's a good location with lots of room for people to spread out. Honey Creek is the longest cave so even if you're not a big fan of TCR, it's worth the trip for Honey Creek.

The Colorado Bend State Park project will be under new management this year. Our own Rafal Kedzierski will be the project manager with support help from Mark Gee, Keith Heuss and I. After I finish writing this article, I'm going to meet with Rafal and Mark to finalize some dates and do some planning. In my discussions with the Park Superintendent Cory Evans, he wants to get things where they are more open and more often if we cavers can get people to turn out. I explained to him that over the last 20 years, more people had got their start in Texas caving at CBSP than anywhere else. His response is that he'd like to get that going again. I reminded him that depending on the people who arrived at the project we might have to re do some stuff, re-ridgewalk some areas, re-explore some caves. He doesn't have a problem with that.

There are several things to keep in mind about CBSP. To anyone's knowledge, inside and outside of

Texas Parks and Wildlife, CBSP is the longest continuously running volunteer project in the park system – no one inside or outside TPWD wants to see that change. TPWD went off the public fund some years ago so are charged with being self-sufficient and require volunteers in many areas to survive. A park with volunteers gets a higher budget than a park without volunteers. That means cavers are money in the bank to a park manager.

Try to come out and support Rafal this fall and have some fun along the way. I hope to have more information for next month's newsletter. Maybe Rafal will write an article.

Anyone who has e-mail probably realizes there's a real heavy influx of SPAM right now. Some fool seems to think we all want to buy some junk stock just because he says it's great. The sending e-mail isn't even valid. I had to change the officer e-mails on the website and delete the old ones to keep people from going nuts! An additional SPAM filter is turned on, on the website. If you send an e-mail to one of the officers (use the link on the website), you'll get an e-mail back asking you to respond like a real human. I hate when I get those but understand even more now why people turn those filters on. If you can't remember an officer's home e-mail and use the links on the website, be prepared to prove you're a human being.

Some ways to keep from getting on the SPAM lists: 1. Don't sign up to see if you're really going to get a free laptop! You might get it but you're going to have to buy so much junk to qualify that it's more expensive than just going down and buying the laptop. You'll also be amazed at the amount of e-mail you receive after that. I tried it with an e-mail I could delete to see what would happen. Much to my expectation, I ended up deleting the e-mail and didn't get a laptop. I must admit I did get one nice quote for health insurance. 2. Be careful what mailing lists you sign up for. Most professional and caving list get you on that list and that list only. Others make a good living selling your e-mail address to the big mailing list in the sky. The one you signed up from is probably the only one you want get an e-mail from. 3. Buying stuff online is usually OK, most online vendors don't want to share customer addresses with others. They probably will send you a few e-mails themselves.

I don't know which is worse, Spam in the can or Spam in my e-mail. Both are pretty bad.

**Happy August!**



## Weekend trip to Arkansas

July 14-16, 2006

Caves visited: Whippoorwill, Cave Mountain and War Eagle Cave

By: Tammy Cox

Participants: Milo Marks, Bill Tucker, Cynthia Hall, Kendall Coulson, Ed Malcom, Danny Malcom, Lex and Tammy Cox

Lex, Cynthia and I headed out after work on Thursday to make about half the drive up to Arkansas. We stopped around 11:00 pm somewhere past Eufala, Oklahoma at a hotel that we could see from the highway. The parking lot didn't appear to be full so we went in and asked for two rooms for the night. The man working the night desk said they only had one room left with two beds. We were tired and didn't want to drive anymore so we settled for the one room. Needless to say Lex was thrilled at the chance to stay in a room with two women.

The next morning we drove onto Withrow Springs State Park and met up with the others. Milo and Bill had been over to Picnic Cave that morning and were just getting back to the park about the time we got there.

Danny had to work half a day and was not there yet so we set up camp, ate some lunch and decided to go check out the small cave in the park that we had seen on the map. It was located on the War Eagle Creek trail.



*Milo Marks, Lex Cox and Bill Tucker at camp*

Since this cave was on the park map and not very far away we decided to just take a flashlight and go check it out. The thought of just walking in, looking around and walking back out came to mind so we didn't wear kneepads or helmets, except for Milo.

We hiked for about ten minutes before we saw an opening on the left side of the trail that appeared to be a cave entrance. Milo went in to see what it did while the rest of us waited for him to do the crawling and let us know if it went very far. He came back in just a few minutes and said it didn't go anywhere.

After hiking a few more feet down the trail we saw the cave. There was a big sign at the entrance that gave it away. It has a large entrance but the cave is pretty small. The temperature inside was very cool and felt good after being outside in the 100-degree heat. There was a stream that was running out of the cave that was making a very relaxing sound and we all joked about camping in the cave to beat the heat. Bill was king

of the hill as he posed for a picture on top of a large breakdown area. We all checked out the rest of the cave for about thirty minutes and then hiked back to camp.

*Milo checking out the first hole that didn't go very far.*



*Bill Tucker king of the hill in War Eagle Cave*



When we got back to camp Danny had finally arrived and was ready to go caving. So we had

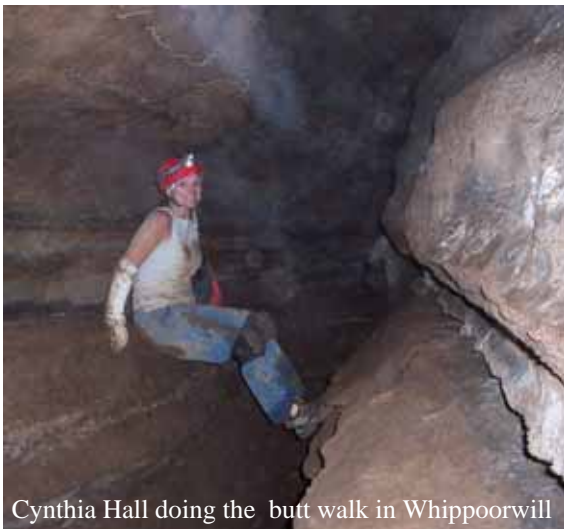
another snack, (caving makes you hungry) loaded up our stuff and drove fifteen minutes down the road to Whippoorwill Cave.

Whippoorwill is located in the MCWMA, Madison County Wildlife Management Area, and is big enough to spend six or seven hours pushing holes and getting muddy. Ed took a picture at the entrance of the cave while we were still clean. Then



we all went in where it was cool. We came across a few holes that we had not pushed before and Danny was ready to check them out. Ed and Kendall spotted him while he climbed up a pretty tricky area and checked out a lead that we had not looked at before, and then Kendall climbed up behind him. They said it didn't go very far but was fun to see.

There is an area where you sort of do a chimney across a drop off that we refer to as the "butt walk". I got a picture of Cynthia going across to give you an idea of why we call it that. We pushed a lot of holes and had a lot of fun and then we went



Cynthia Hall doing the butt walk in Whippoorwill

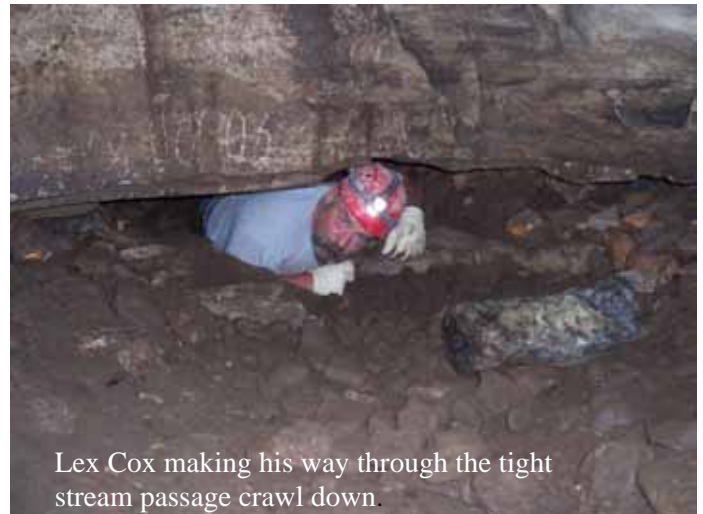
back to camp to have hot dogs at midnight before going to sleep for the next day of caving.

Saturday morning Lex cooked up a big breakfast for everyone. We had bacon, hash browns and eggs before going to Cave Mountain.

Cave Mountain is located near Boxley, Arkansas. It took us about thirty-five minutes to make the drive from our camp to the cave. When we got there the parking area was full and we had to drive down the road a little further to find a place to park. Since this cave is only open from May 15<sup>th</sup> - August 15<sup>th</sup> it is usually well visited on the weekends.

We went in the cave with two groups. Milo, Bill, Danny and Cynthia were going to do the rappel down and go check out the art room passage and the rest of us were going to try to find the crawl down through a stream passage that we had been told about. But when we got inside we found that another group had already rigged a rope and was down at the bottom. We talked to one of their group that said they would probably be back in about an hour, so Milo's group decided to wait there for a while.

The rest of us went to find the crawl down. There was a short crawl that opened up into a larger room that had about a six-foot pit that you had to drop down into. Once you were down it continued on to another crawl that then opened up into a smaller room. Then from there you were in the stream passage that was a tight squeeze full of smooth river rocks. We had been told that some times the rocks wash in and fill up the passage and that you could take a small shovel or something and



Lex Cox making his way through the tight stream passage crawl down.

push them to one side to open it up enough to make it through. I went in first with a big plastic scoop that Milo had armed me with and started pushing rocks out of the way. After about twenty minutes of pushing rocks and squeezing through we made it to the bottom of the cave.



Ed Malcom crawling through the stream passage to the bottom of Cave Mountain

Our next stop was the art room. We spent a lot of time there checking things out and we even made a little art of our own. Of course Ed and I got pictures.



Ed Malcom looking at some cave art



More cave art



Kendall making a ginger bread house

Up top the others had given up on rigging a rope. The group that was there before us was still at the bottom. They decided to go out of the cave to warm up and Milo discovered a tree that was perfect for rigging for vertical practice. He did just that and they got started practicing. This was Cynthia's first time to do vertical work and Danny's second or third time. With expert instruction from Bill at the bottom and Milo at the top they got a lot of practice in and were feeling very comfortable with their technique.



Danny Malcom and Cynthia Hall practicing vertical work outside of Cave Mountain.

Bill Tucker belaying at the bottom of the practice area.



It was late and we were tired and hungry so we went into town for dinner at Granny's Kitchen in Huntsville, Arkansas. The food was wonderful and the company was great. We talked about caving of course and decided to go back to Cave Mountain the next morning to try to rig again.

After dinner we went back to camp and Danny and Milo remembered there was a stream passage coming out of a cave in the park. Lex, Milo, Danny and I went to check it out. The water was very cold and we didn't get far before it got too deep to do without a wet suit and maybe a mask. We could hear a loud noise that sounded like a waterfall just a few feet in front of us but decided to leave it for another day.

Sunday morning we went back to Cave Mountain as planned. There was no one at the rig point so Milo and Bill got the ropes and the webbing out and started to rig. In no time we all had our vertical gear on and were ready to go to the bottom. Milo went down first and I went next so I could get ready at the bottom to take pictures. Ed was ready to take pictures at the top.

Milo Marks Belaying at the bottom of Cave Mountain.





The five of us, Milo, Bill, Cynthia, Danny and myself rappelled in while Lex stayed at the top to watch the rope. We had been told that it was good to leave someone at the top because kids had been known to steel ropes. Ed and Kendall explored the upper section of the cave while we looked around at the bottom.

At the bottom we explored for a while before going to the art room. Today Danny was king of the hill as he posed for a picture on top of a pretty neat formation. We had a great time and added to the cave art again before we climbed out.



Danny Malcom scouting out his next passage.

When we got to the top we met a couple of Arkansas cavers waiting to rig. Chuck Maize and Doug from the Central Region Arkansas Grotto aka CRAG. Chuck remembered he had met Lex at Whippoorwill last year. We visited with them for a while about caving, they told us where some other good places were and then we drove back to camp.

Back at camp we broke down the tents, loaded up the vehicles and we all said our goodbyes and are looking forward to doing it again.

Here are some pictures of the trip for your enjoyment:



Milo Marks and Bill Tucker rappelling in Cave Mountain



Yes I was really there, Tammy Cox at Cave Mountain



Cynthia Hall on rope at Cave Mountain



Bill Tucker on rope at Cave Mountain



Lex Cox at Cave Mountain



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