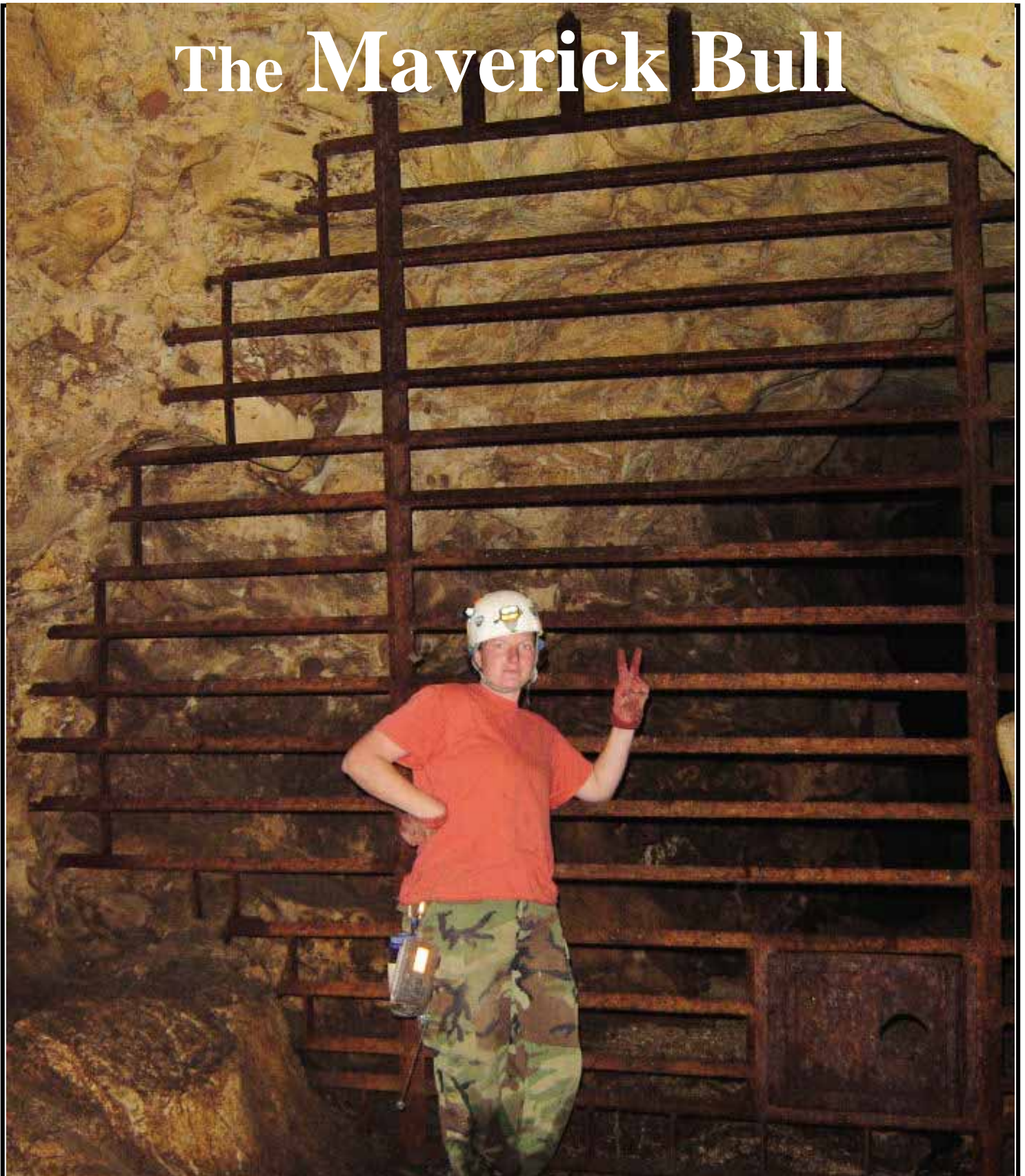


The Maverick Bull



Volume 20, 8

Maverick Grotto Information

Copyright 2007 The Maverick Grotto.

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. Diana Tomchick or Bill Steele will be accepting books and magazines on cave-related topics, copies of homemade cave videos, etc. for our library.

Photos & Map Credits

Cover Photo: Kelly Still at the Gorman Cave Bat Gate—Tone Garot

Back Cover: Hill Country Borehole—Allan Cobb (2006)

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 14th , 2007 7:00 pm

Angelo's BBQ, 2533 White Settlement Rd. Fort Worth, TX 76107. 817-332-0357

Program: Water in Caving! but not negotiating water in caves, but rather on drinking water, washing dishes, and bathing. This will be a facilitated program with member/visitor participation.

See Article in newsletter.

Chair

Daniel Dase
6458 Sumac
Fort Worth, TX 76116
C: (903) 814-8342
danieljdase@yahoo.com

Secretary

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

Newsletter Editor

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

Vice-Chair

Bill Steele
500 Kingston Dr.
Irving, TX 75061
(214) 770-4712
speleosteele@tx.rr.com

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

Aug 18-19 Manhole Dig (Carlsbad region, NM): Cavediggers welcome, come see if this will be the next big one. If you plan to come, contact Steve as they need a minimum of eight people now to run the dig. Located on BLM land not far from Lechuguilla Cave. **Contact:** Steve Peerman gypcaver@comcast.net

Aug 31-Sept 3 TSA Bustamante Cave Restoration Project (Nuevo León, México): This project is up in the air this year. Orion Knox and Rune Burnett want to retire and the project off to someone else. Stay tuned to the Texas Caver Mailing list to see if more information develops.

Aug 31-Sept 3 Southwest Region Labor Day Regional: Location to be announced.

Sept 15 TCC Cave Day (Cedar Park): This is an open house where visitors visit the caves at the Westside Preserve, Dies Ranch Shelter Cave and the TCC owned Dies Ranch Treasure Cave. Since we expect in excess of 500 visitors, your help in the public education project is important. **Info:** <http://texascaves.org>

Sep 15-16 Manhole Dig

Sep 29-30 High Guads Restoration Project

Oct 6-13 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. You can attend during the whole project week, or either weekend. **Contact:** John Corcoran III john_j_corcoran_III@msn.com

Oct 8-12 National Cave & Karst Management Symposium (St. Louis, MO). Held at the Holiday Inn Southwest/Viking Conference Center and Powder Valley Nature Center. Co-sponsored by Missouri Department of Conservation and Missouri Caves and Karst Conservancy. **Contacts:** Bill Elliott Bill.Elliott@mdc.mo.gov Jim Kaufmann president@mocavesandkarst.org

Oct 15-21 Cave Research Foundation 50th Anniversary Celebration (Hamilton Valley, KY). Come celebrate 50 years of exploration of Mammoth Cave (and other caves around the U.S.) at the CRF Hamilton Valley Field Station. Caving, guided tours, camaraderie, food, song, camping and general good fun. Field trips will be conducted from Oct. 15-18th in the Mammoth Cave System, general celebration will occur from Oct. 19-21st. **Contact:** Pat Kambesis pnkambesis@juno.com

Oct 19-21 Texas Cavers Reunion. This year, the TCR will be held at Paradise Canyon Park on the Medina River. The site is located just outside of San Antonio below the Diversion Dam on the Medina River. The site has a half-mile of river front with many good camping areas. The swimming will be superb and there are even some small caves across the

river. **Website:** <http://cavetexas.org/events/TCR/index.html>,
MAP: <http://www.cavetexas.org/maps/tcr2007.html>

Meeting Minutes July 10, 2007

Attending: Scott Boyd, Tammy Cox, Mike Cagle, Jose Curras, Steve Dalton, Daniel Dase, Butch Fralia, Sharon Mastbrook, Phil Sanders, James Savage, Bill Steele, Mike Swinford, Bill Tucker, and Francie Tucker. **Visitors:** Carol Gerow, Liz Brockey.

The July meeting of The Maverick Grotto was held at Angelo's BBQ. Chairman Daniel Dase opened the meeting at 7:20 PM.

The meeting began with the introduction of visitors. Carol Gerow visited as the guest of Phil Sanders. She's fascinated by earth science but by her admission is to claustrophobic to go underground. Daniel's friend Liz Brockey who recently attended a trip set up by Tammy Cox, attended.

The program was "The Return to Mt. Thor, Baffin Island" while a very long program (ended at 8:42PM) it was a very interesting program. There were several short breaks during the program stretching it from 55 minutes to 1:20 minutes.

Reports from officers:

Chairman: Daniel asked people what they thought of Angelo's and asked for a vote to hold it there in August. Unanimously passed.

Vice-Chairman: Bill Steele had nothing to report.

Treasurer: Sharon Mastbrook reported there's money in the bank! Sharon reported that there has been a problem and complaints of people not getting their checks cashed in a timely fashion. This is because there are few Co-America Banks in the Fort Worth area and the closest one is in Arlington. A special trip to Arlington from SW Fort Worth has to be made for each deposit.

Sharon reported she had talked with Frost Bank (two offices near her home) and they would be willing to take on The Maverick Grotto Checking for no service charge for more checks than the grotto would write in a month. She asked for permission and unanimously received permission to move the Grotto checking account from Co-America to Frost Bank.

Secretary/Newsletter Editor/Webmaster: Butch Fralia reported the usual that Newsletter Articles and "stuff" for the website are always needed. He reported on the new member area on the website and asked everyone to register at their convenience. Maintenance is much simpler for the webmaster.

Announcements: Milo Marks is in the hospital with pneumonia. The grotto will send a get well card (done).

Trip Reports:

Bill Tucker reported on visiting Harrell's Cave at the invitation of the caretaker. An area around the cave has been cleared for camping.

Bill Steele reported on going to Montemayor and problems the he and Diana Tomchick had getting into Mexico. Quite an event, will save details for a future newsletter article!

Note: A number of people paid dues!



Editorial

By Butch Fralia

It's been said what it was like in the "olden" days and what it's like now to produce a newsletter. In those "olden" days, it could take 40 hours or more to put together a newsletter and that was just to the point of printing. Now it can be done in a few hours.

Technology changes a lot of things but it doesn't change people's desire to take the time to write an article. For this issue, I've got to recognize and thank Keith Heuss. He responded to the call. I haven't even looked at all the stuff he's sent yet but we'll all see it later in the newsletter.

It's the dog days of summer, other than the NSS convention not much caving going on. Maybe the problem is that we've restricted it to cave related. Whatever, this is your August newsletter and I hope you find something you can enjoy.

Obituary

By Butch Fralia

Texas Cave Bear 11/24/1993—07/27/2007

It is with heavy heart that Sharon and I announce that our old Labrador Retriever, Bear finally reached his end of days. A quality life became unsustainable and he made his last visit to the Vet, July 27, 2007. He leaves us with many wonderful memories of great trips and times together. I'm sure that a number of people who've been around Bear could tell their own tales about him. Some positive and some negative. To us, all our memories are positive.

August Program

By Bill Steele

The program for August will be on the subject of water in caving, but not negotiating water in caves, but rather on drinking water, washing dishes, and bathing.

Here's my outline:

- I. Water for surface camping use
 - A. Sources
 - B. Transportation
 - B. Methods of purifying
- II. Underground
 - A. How much to drink?
 - B. Containers
 - C. Purifying methods
 - D. Hazards
- III. Washing dishes
 - A. Best method
 - B. When underground camping
- IV. Bathing
 - A. Surface streams

- B. Shower bags
- C. Underground

I will show a few slides, and will be bringing water jugs, different means of purification, a shower bag, and so on. I mean for this to be a facilitated discussion, so I encourage those planning to attend to open up and tell everyone what their practices are.

Texas Cavers Reunion

By Allen Cobb

(excerpted from the TexasCaver List)

All cavers are invited to come to the 30th Texas Cavers Reunion! TCR will be October 19-21.

For more information about TCR and see pictures of the site, visit www.oztotl.com/tcr.

This year, TCR will be located near San Antonio on the Medina River. We will be at the Paradise Canyon Park (<http://paradisecanyon.com>).

Stay tuned for future updates.

See, I told y'all updates would be coming.

An observant observer noted that on the Paradise Canyon Park web site, they clearly state NO PETS. They are serious about that and that is their policy when the park is open to the general public. For the weekend of TCR, the owners of the park are gracious enough to give permission for us to have dogs since we are renting the entire park. Please only bring well behaved dogs. Dogs are welcome at this TCR and I plan on bringing my dogs. If you bring dogs, please pick up anything your dog drops. You are responsible for your dog. Dogs are allowed off leash as long as they are not a nuisance. Please bring some means of controlling your dog, if he or she starts annoying others. As long as your dog isn't a problem, there is no problem. :-)

Lemon Surprise Ice Cream

By Keith Heuss

To make 1 gallon, use the amounts below

- 1 cup sugar
- 6 eggs
- 1 cup white corn syrup
- 2 teaspoons vanilla
- 2 teaspoon lemon extract
- 1 can sweetened condensed milk
- 13-ounce can evaporated milk
- milk

Beat all ingredients in order and put in freezer. Finish filling container with milk until about three-fourths full. Freeze.

So, what's in this funny name?

Well, it was quite by accident. One October we were having a Friends of the Park event at Colorado Bend State Park. We were having a community meal and my contribution was to be my vanilla ice cream I have been making for my work for

years. I was in a rush when it came to time to buy the ingredients. I picked up a bottle of what I thought was vanilla extract. Well, it came time to mix up the batch of ice cream. When I opened what I thought was vanilla extract, it all happened so fast. I opened the bottle, poured it into the measuring spoon and in it went. Before I could stop my hand, it was in the mix. I looked at the bottle and to my surprise, I had picked up a bottle of lemon extract by mistake. It was too late by then. I searched around the lodge and found a bottle of vanilla and I added the required amount to the mix. To my surprise, it turned out to taste great. Everybody enjoyed the lemon flavor of my ice cream. This week, I remembered the recipe and I added it to my recipe list as Lemon Surprise Ice Cream. Enjoy it.

Gorman Cave Photo Project.

By Keith Heuss

An insight into how I got started in caving is in order. In the fall of 1966, I was enrolled into Temple Junior College located in of course in, Temple, Texas, just 15 miles from my home town of Killeen, Texas. I was going there because a friend of mine that I had known since the 6th grade was going there. I was a pre-engineering student. My friend Mike Conder knew that I was interested in caves. I didn't know at that time that there was such a thing as organized cavers. I was just interested in caves.

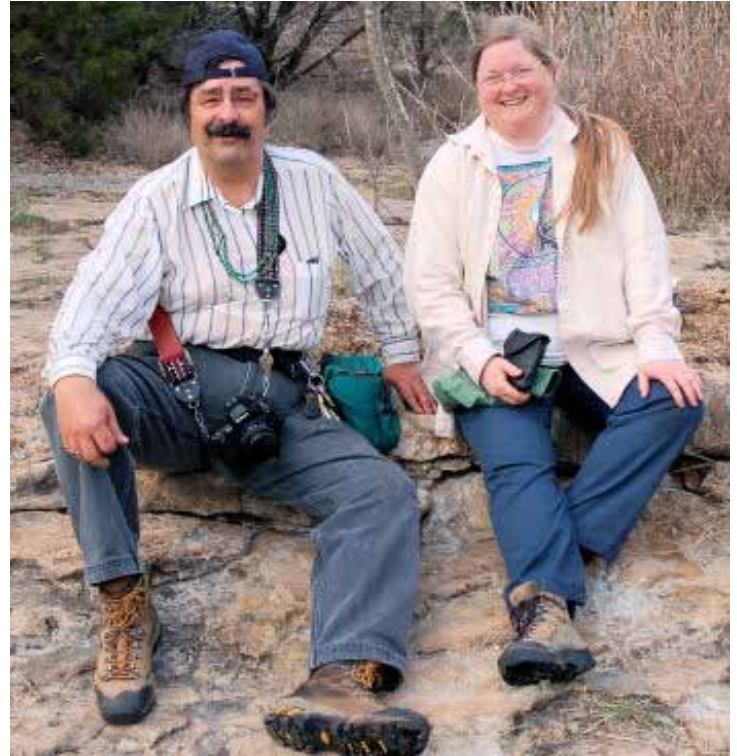
My first "cave" adventure was in my home town of Killeen. The city was working on a new sewer line near my home one year. Some friends and I found that the dirt covering of the sewer line had collapsed and left an opening below the dirt covering. We got some flashlights and explored the passage left by the collapse. By luck, it did not collapse on us while we were inside. We were young, high school or junior high students at the time and we didn't know any better.

My uncle Elmer had a 100+/- farm 8 miles from town. I would go there and explore the land, looking for holes in the ground. I found a "cave" entrance near the back of the farm. It was a dig. I spend many a weekend digging on the "cave", but it never opened up.

Anyway, my friend Mike knew I was interested in caves. During our stay at Temple Junior College, Mike Conder introduced me to a "real caver" Mike Bales. Mike Bales lived in Gatesville at the time and he too commuted to Temple Junior College. After the introduction, Mike Bales and I became good friends. Mike Bales took me to some "real" caves. We visited Gorman Cave, Harrell's Cave in San Saba County and Diamond Cave in Coryell County. Later we visited Deep, Punkin and Blow Hole caves in Val Verde County. Mike Conder and Mike Bales are both responsible for getting me into organized caving.

Mike Bales moved to Florida in 1975 and we lost contact with each other. In 1985 Mike Bales moved back to Texas. It was some years, but we got back into contact with each other. Mike and his wife Connie Bales came out to a Colorado Bend State Park project some years ago and we hung out together during the project weekend.

Mike and Connie are now regulars participants on the Colorado Bend State Park project. During one of the project weekends, Mike and I were talking about a project to do a front to back photo shoot in Gorman Cave. Mike liked the idea and we de-



Mike and Connie Bales

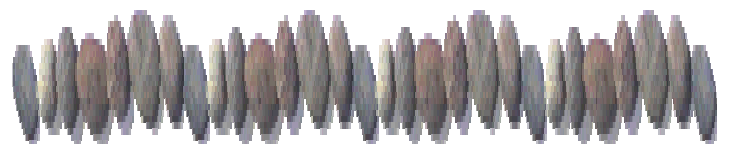
- Photo Keith Heuss

ecided to start it up during the summer of 2007. We scheduled trips during the summer, staying at the lodge, and driving to as close to the cave as we could.

Our first trip was in June. We experienced technical difficulties with Mike's camera and the trip yielded no photos, but a lesson in pre-trip preparation. July went better, but we had a project to install a flood gage in Gorman Cave that took priority. It did yield some photos and more lessons learned.

During the photo shoot, we will have a staff of helpers and several flash units for multiple flashes. The project starts at the entrance and will continue to the back of the cave. We will be carrying the Mike Warton map of the cave with us and we will document technical information on each shot as well as the location of the camera and the direction of view for each picture. We plan to spend several trips in the Graffiti Room, documenting the old dates and names. When we finish, we should have a complete record, photographically, of the cave. This will not be a small task in itself.

Look for a complete detailed report in the upcoming publication, *The Caves of Colorado Bend State Park*. It will contain a section on Gorman Cave which will have the Mike Warton Gorman Cave map as well as many of the better photographs from this project as well as old and historic photos taken in the cave over the years.



An In Cave Flood Gage
by Keith Heuss

This summer, Mike and Connie Bales and I started the photographic documentation of Gorman Cave. During our visits to the cave, we noted that it had resurged several times. Evidence of how high the water got at the gate, some 800 feet into the cave, was left as debris that had washed into the cave with the flood waters, deposited at various levels on the gate. We could not measure how high the water got due the incomplete deposit record.

On the way back from the cave during the June trip, a plan was hatched. We tossed around many ideas of how to measure the water height during one of these flood events. Many ideas were suggested, but most were abandoned. We finally came up with a workable solution. We would use 2 inch PVC pipe end caps as water catchment "buckets." The buckets would be mounted on a 2x4 board and were placed every two inches. A hole was drilled through the top of the buckets and a screw attached them to the 2x4. We used an 8 foot 2x4 so we could measure up to 8 feet deep water.

Construction and operation are quite simple. We mounted the flood gage on the inside of the gate. If a flood event occurs, the buckets will be filled to the highest bucket that was submerged. The staff of the Colorado Bend State Park keeps rain measurements and hold weekly trips into the cave. They will be the ones to read the gauge. The buckets are mounted quite firmly so as not to rotate and empty the water out as the flood occurs.

After a flood event has subsided, a caver or park ranger can read the gage. Each bucket was marked in feet and inches it is above the lowest level of the floor. To read the gauge, you simply rotate the buckets, emptying the water out and record the highest level the water was at. To reset the gauge in preparation for the next flood event, all of the buckets must be emptied and returned to the upright position.

The July Trip.

July came and Mike and Connie Bales arrived at the park late Friday night. An intern, Hollee Schwingel was working at the park during June and July. Since we didn't have many folks



Mike (the nerd) and Connie Bales in the Conference Center.
- Photo Keith Heuss



Kit for a rain gauge.

- Photo Keith Heuss

show up for the weekend, Cory let us take Hollee with us into the cave to help us with the gate installation.

Friday afternoon, I laid all the parts out on the floor and started marking two inch intervals on the 2x4. Parts required are, 1) a 2x4, treated lumber so as not to rot in the 100% humidity of the cave 2) 50 end caps 2 inch PVC for an 8 foot board and 3) A box of 2 inch screws, use outdoor quality screws. For an 8 foot gage, total cost is about \$25. See photo 4 for the "kit." Photo 5 show the completed gage and photo 6 shows a close-up of the mounted "buckets." An hour later, the finished gauge was at hand.

Saturday morning came and we were ready to install the gage. Hollee arrived shortly after noon and we were ready to go. Since the park service holds guided tours on Saturday morning, we had to wait until the tour was over before we could enter the cave.

Hollie, Mike, Connie and I headed for the cave shortly after Hollee got there. I had a neat kit packed away in my battery operated drill. It was reviewed several times to be sure I had everything we would need to install the gauge. We had decided to



Close up of rain gauge.

- Photo Keith Heuss



Hollee Schwingel labels "buckets" with depth for easy reference.
- Photo Keith Heuss

install the gage on the inside of the gate so no one would tamper with it. Well we soon arrived at the gate. I broke out the kit and Oops. Where is the key to the gate? Oh well, something had to go wrong. Since I forgot the key, I headed back to my Jeep to get the key. Upon heading out of the cave, I heard from the cave a faint "Keith." It was Hollee coming to stop me from going out of the cave. She had figured out that we could install the gauge from the outside of the gate. Well, it worked.

We pushed the gage through the gate and stood it upright in the position we wanted to mount it. We measured from the lowest point of the floor to the bottom bucket. It was 10 inches. We retrieved the gage and marked each bucket in feet and inches above the first bucket. Since Hollee has such beautiful handwriting, she got the task of marking each bucket.

After the installation was completed, we headed back to the entrance where Connie was tending the camera gear. We had to leave the cave early due to a prior commitment, so we did not get much time in shooting photographs. And wouldn't you know it, the rains stopped. It hasn't come a hard rain at the park since the installation.

Sunday was spent walking the old Gorman Trail. I wanted to



Hollee Schwingel cooking in the Gorman Falls conference center.
- Photo Keith Heuss



Connie Bales and Innka at dry waterfall overlook.
- Photo Keith Heuss

show Mike and Connie the usually dry creek bed that crosses over the cave. On a future trip when the weather is cooler, we are going to do some cave radio locations of Gorman Cave. According to a cave map plotted on the topographic map of the park, the "breakdown collapse area" beyond the gate and "separation lake" is almost directly under the creek bed. A cave radio location done in the breakdown area would reveal the true location of the cave in reference to the creek bed. I believe this is one point that water gets into the cave.

Well it is done. Hollee leaves for Yellowstone Park on August 5 where she will continue her internship. We all wish her well and we hope she gets the job she wants at Yellowstone. We wish to thank the Colorado Bend Friends of the Park for funding the flood gage in Gorman Cave.

Destination: Colorado Bend State Park
Project date: July 13-15, 2007
Reported by: Keith Heuss
Report date: July 24, 2007
Person-hours: 50.5 hours

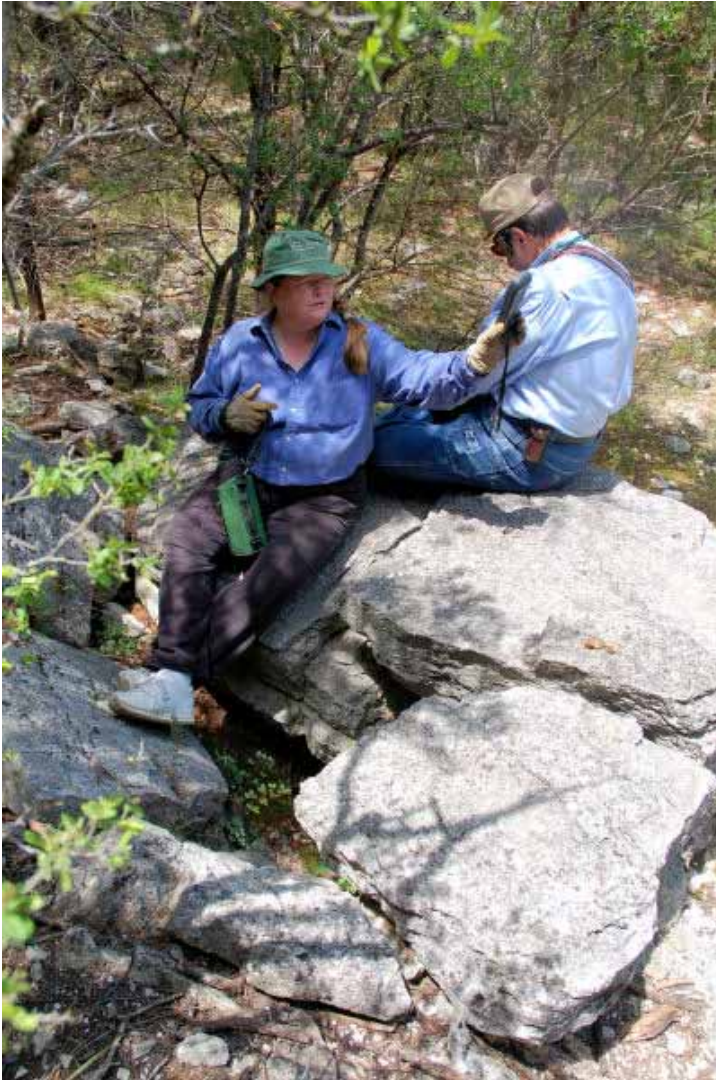
Personnel: (4 folks) Connie Bales, Mike Bales, Keith Heuss, Hollee Schwingel

Total driving time: Estimated 20 hours. Connie Bales and Mike Bales (8 hours each); Keith Heuss, (4 hours)

Total volunteer hours: Estimated 30.5 hours. Keith Heuss, (11.5 hours); Mike Bales, Connie Bales, (7.5 hours each); Hollee Schwingel (4 hours)

Friday evening I spent a couple of hours putting the flood gage together. The design was a community effort during the June trip. Connie suggested the water catch cups be mounted rigid so as not to tilt up when the water comes.

Saturday around noon, the four of us headed to Gorman Cave. The first order of business was to install the flood gage. I



Connie Bales taking GPS location at PG Pit Cave, Mike Bales on Rock.

- Photo Keith Heuss

had put a kit together the previous day and all was there and in fine order when we got to the gate. The only problem was, I forgot the key. I headed back to the car to get the key. After a short time, Hollee was behind me hollering my name. She had figured out that we could install the gage working from this side of the gate. We got it installed and it is just waiting for the next rain.

We next headed back to the entrance of the cave where Connie was waiting with the camera equipment. We shot several pictures before it was time to go. We were back at the lodge around 4:00 PM. We observed the cave was the wettest we have seen it. We observed some bats in flight. Mike estimated around 50. I think about half that many were there. On the hike back to the lodge, we saw a 14 inch long diamondback rattlesnake. We kept our distance.

Sunday we were away from the lodge at 10:30 AM. We hiked the old trail from the Gorman Cave parking lot down to the creek. We relocated Lone Bat II Cave and PG Pit. Mike got a GPS reading on both caves. We were out longer that we wanted to be. We arrived back at the parking lot around 2:00 PM.

“Die Familie, die zusammen höhlt, hält zusammen!”

“The Family that caves together stays together!”

HOW OLD IS GRANPA?

How old is Grandpa?

Stay with this - the answer is at the end - it will blow you away.

One evening a grandson was talking to his grandfather about current events. The grandson asked his grandfather what he thought about the shootings at schools, the computer age, and just things in general. The granddad replied,

"Well, let me think a minute, I was born, before television, penicillin, polio shots, frozen foods, Xerox, contact lenses, Frisbees and the pill.

There was no radar, credit cards, laser beams or ballpoint pens. Man had not invented pantyhose, air conditioners, dishwashers, clothes dryers, and the clothes were hung out to dry in the fresh air and man hadn't yet walked on the moon.

Your grandmother and I got married first-and then lived together. Every family had a father and a mother. Until I was 25, I called every Man older than I, 'Sir'- and after I turned 25, I still called policemen and every man with a title, "Sir." We were before gay-rights, computer dating, dual careers, daycare centers, and group therapy. The Ten Commandments, good judgment, and common sense governed our lives. We were taught to know the difference between right and wrong and to stand up and take responsibility for our actions.

Serving your country was a privilege; living in this country was a bigger privilege. We thought fast food was what people ate during Lent.

Having a meaningful relationship meant getting along with your cousins. Draft dodgers were people who closed their front doors when the evening breeze started. Time-sharing meant time the family spent together in the evenings and weekends, not purchasing condominiums.

We never heard of FM radios, tape decks, CDs, electric typewriters, yogurt, or guys wearing earrings. We listened to the Big Bands, Jack Benny, and the President's speeches on our radios. And I don't ever remember any kid blowing his brains out listening to Tommy Dorsey.

If you saw anything with 'Made in Japan' on it, it was junk. The Term 'making out' referred to how you did on your school exam. Pizza Hut, McDonald's, and instant coffee were unheard of. We had 5 & 10-cent stores where you could actually buy things for 5 and 10 cents. Ice cream cones, phone calls, ride on a streetcar, and a Pepsi were all a nickel. And if you didn't want to splurge, you could spend your nickel on enough stamps to mail 1 letter and 2 postcards.

You could buy a new Chevy Coupe for \$600 but who could afford one? Too bad, because gas was 11 cents a gallon. In my day, "grass" was mowed, "coke" was a cold drink, "pot" was something your mother cooked in, and "rock music" was your grandmother's lullaby. "Aids" were helpers in the Principal's office, "chip" meant a piece of wood, "hardware" was found in a hardware store, and software wasn't even a word. And we were

the last generation to actually believe that a lady needed a husband to have a baby.

No wonder people call us "old and confused" and say there is a generation gap... and how old do you think I am???.....

Read on to see - - - pretty scary if you think about it and pretty sad at the same time.

This man would be only 58 years old.

Visitors at Natural Bridge Caverns wade in aquifer

Updated: 7/29/2007 12:56:54 PM

By: Russell Wilde

The Glen Rose Aquifer near New Braunfels rose to record levels filling parts of Natural Bridge Caverns with millions of gallons of water.

It's not unusual for water to drip off Limestone formations in Natural Bridge Caverns, but for the first time in cave history, you have to wade in. It gives park visitors a rare look at the inside of a working aquifer.

"This is the very first time in the history of operation that our guests have the opportunity to put their feet into the Glen Rose Aquifer," Joye Wuest of Natural Bridge Caverns said.

Rain water that has worked its way underground is recharging water supplies and turning a cavern tour into very wet science lesson.

"You do get to go down and take a look at something, which really few people ever get the chance to see. That's an aquifer," geologist Brian Vauter said.

Because of the high water, two rooms in the cavern are inaccessible and working your way down to water level requires you to get your feet wet. Water in some of the cave's rooms is close to 35 feet deep. Some parts of the tour require cave visitors to wade through about a foot of water.

It can take rain water up to three days to work its way into the cave, and only time will tell how long it will stay. Geologists said it could take weeks or months for the water to drain out of the cavern.

"This is definitely not something that is normal, and it's not something that's going to stick around," Vauter said.

"We do not know how long this condition will last, it depends on rainfall, it depends on how fast the aquifer is depleted," Wuest said.

Geologists said the high water levels won't damage cave formations and the foot traffic won't pollute the water supply. This is the highest water level recorded since the cave was discovered in 1960s.

2007 NSS Convention, Indiana

Jacqui Thomas, member of the SWR and TSA vice-chair, entered a water color in this year's Fine Arts Salon at the annual NSS convention in Indiana. The art work was judged and placed first in it's division, amid very strong competition.

The work was patterned after an Allan Cobb photo of the Devil's Sinkhole and was previously purchased by Bill Bentley at

the TCMA auction last spring.

The work was patterned after an Allan Cobb photo of the Devil's Sinkhole and was previously purchased by Bill Bentley at the TCMA auction last spring.

This was Jacqui's first entry into the salon competition and she is overwhelmed at the honor.

Thanks to Allan Cobb for the photo inspiration and to Bill Bentley for loaning us the painting to be entered in this year's event.

Congratulations, Jacqui.


Further notes from the convention indicate that while everyone was in an underground warehouse at the photo salon judging, one heck of a storm hit the campground. Word is that a lot of tents and camping equipment were destroyed. At the end of the storm, emergency rescue was on site handing out blankets and other emergency items for those who lost it all or most of it.

As the Chinese say;

"May you live in interesting times!"

New From the TSS !!

THE TSS MAP CD



The *TSS Map CD* contains over 1160 maps in 56 Texas counties! All maps are 300 dpi TIFF files and are organized in folders by county. An Excel™ spreadsheet is included which lists all cave maps, the counties for each, and file size. Now you can view maps of your favorite caves without paging through countless publications !

Only \$10 + S&H

To order, go to <www.txspeleologicalsurvey.org>



**Maverick Grotto
c/o Butch Fralia
3412 Walton Avenue
Fort Worth, TX 76133-2230**