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# THE MAVERICK BULL

THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER  
OF THE MAVERICK GROTTO

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Volume 10, Issue 2

February 1997



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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 Smokey's Ribs, 5300 E. Lancaster, Fort Worth. It is located less than one mile west of Loop 820 and next to K-Mart. The time is 7:00 p.m., and the food is good.

**Carbide:** Grotto carbide is available at the meeting if prior arrangements

are made. Carbide is free for the asking. Contact Russell Hill at 220-7108 or Butch Fralia at 346-2039 for more information.

**Library:** Support your Grotto Library. Russell Hill will be accepting books and magazines on cave-related topics, copies of homemade cave videos, etc. for our library. We wish to thank Russell for his efforts each month to bring and set up the Grotto Library.

**Chairman:**

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**Cave Rescue:** Call collect:

## Photo Credits

This month's cover photo is of Angela Seals in McKittrick Cave and was taken by Chad Fenner

## Other Credits

Editor: Chad Fenner

Editor-in-charge-of-English: Lisa Fenner

## Visit Our Web Site

The *Maverick Bull* is available as a World Wide Web site at: <http://www.why.net/user/caver/bull/>

## Minutes for the January Meeting

### Maverick Grotto January 14, 1997

The January meeting began at approximately 7 p.m. The business portion of the meeting was called to order shortly after 7:30 by Grotto Chairman John Langevin.

#### Visitors

None.

#### Announcements

Dues due, pay Sharon Mastbrook.

This year's NSS membership pamphlet features one of John Langevin's photos (upside-down, though!).

#### Officers' Reports

Treasury: As of the end of the year, we have \$468.80

#### Old Business

None.

#### New Business

Chad Fenner noted that the NSS website listed Mark Porter as the Maverick Grotto point of contact. He offered to correct that but wanted to know who it should be. Grotto Chairman John Langevin offered himself.

John Langevin motioned that the grotto spend money to produce one color cover during the year. The motion was seconded and carried.

Russell Hill then motioned that the grotto sell advertising space to someone who would "sponsor" a color cover. That motion generated

a lot of discussion and was put off 'til next month. (See related article.)

The grotto voted to give a newsletter subscription to Paul Steward (author of several humorous cave-related pieces).

#### Trip Reports

Dave Milhollin spent 17 days in the Yucatan Peninsula with Troy Shelton and John Brooks. They visited lots of caves and ruins. Trip report and program to come.

John Langevin and Pam Massey went to Madonna with Mike Huber, Martha McArthor, and Sheree Mahan. Trip report coming.

Butch and Sharon hit some West Texas Caves.

## Editor's Ramblings

Happy Feburary!

At the last minute I found out that I have to go to Florida on business right during the time I allocated to get the newsletter out.

What that really means is that I don't have a lot of time to work on it, so theres not a lot here. I did have a story from John Langevin, but I think I'm gonna wait 'til we can get some

photos before I publish it.

Well, gotta run.

Good Caving.

CF

## February Meeting

This month's meeting will be held on Tuesday, February 11 at Smokey's Ribs, 5300 E. Lancaster,

at 7 p.m. This month's program was not available at press time. I'm sure something will come together, and

that it will be interesting. Join us for good food and good cave talk.

## Dues Still Due

Well, you're gonna see this message here a few more times, but remember, the first of the year means dues are due. Pay Sharon Mastbrook.

## Rescue of Buffoons at Cave Without A Name

Cave Without A Name is a fine, small show cave located about 40 km northwest of San Antonio, Texas. It consists of a large, well-decorated passage that extends about 200 m to a stream, where the tour trail ends. Its operation is very low-budget and conducted by the sole and elderly owner.

About 2 a.m. on 28 December 1996, five young men from San Antonio (ages 18-19) broke through the gate and entered the cave. They had been on a tour sometime previously and had heard of a decorated upper-level passage located off-trail down the stream. They used the tour lights to light their way to the water, then waded about 150 m downstream. The water reaches chest-depth, and airspace gets as low as 30 cm. Amazingly, they found the sometimes-hard-to-find hand line that leads 6 m up a slippery climb to the upper passage, then began their ascent up a tricky and slippery 7 m freeclimb into the decorated area.

Somewhere near that point, their lights ran out of fuel, and on trying to exit the passage, one of the team, Shane Andrew Malone, fell and hurt his ankle. Reports conflict on whether the ankle was broken or strained. Two of his companions, Joe Green and Brett Wilson, managed to get out of the cave safely, while two others, John Edward Soto II and Eric Virgil, stayed with him. The Kendall County Sheriff's Department and Boerne Volunteer Fire Department responded. During the past year, the BVFD was the site of a National Cave Rescue Commission cave rescue training course.

Rescuers entered the cave at 8:40 a.m., and Malone, Soto, and Virgil were out within about an hour. All three were treated for hypothermia.

No damage came to the cave, and the gate will be repaired courtesy of a metal working shop in San Antonio. All five people were arrested and charged with criminal trespass.

The accident analysis is well-summarized by BVFD Assistant Fire Chief Mike Fincke: "They went down there with just cigarette lighters for light, and a whole load of stupidity." They were reduced to trying to find their way out of the cave using the illuminated dial on Virgil's watch.

*Report compiled by George Veni on 5 January 1996 from interview with owner Eugene Ebell and from the following newspaper report: Anonymous. 1997. Cave adventure goes awry. Hill Country Recorder, January 1, 13(48):1.*

## Call for Photo Workshops and Papers

Dear Cave Photographers:

Seems like I just wrote this letter only recently, but it has been nearly a year since I have done so. None the less, it is time for me to remind you once again that the 1997 NSS Convention is approaching, and the Photo Section needs your help.

In an effort to repeat or even surpass the wonderful papers and workshops on cave photography that were given last year in Colorado, I am asking you to consider giving one of your own this summer in Missouri. As always, it can be on any subject you feel you would like to give, be it for beginner all the way to professional levels of expertise. After all, our audience runs that gamut as well. Papers may also be of short or long duration, but I ask you to try to keep it under half an hour so as to allow space for everyone.

If you have a topic you would like to give, please submit an abstract of no more than 250 words, describing the presentation you would like to give. Also please state the approximate length of the talk. I will need your

completed abstract submitted to me no later than April 1st so that I can meet the deadline for the Convention Guidebook.

This year's convention will be somewhat different from last year's, in that there will be real caves close by. That means that someone can lead an actual underground photo workshop!!! I could definitely use someone to volunteer to lead such a trip. These have always been very popular, and I would expect this one to fill up relatively fast. Anyone from the Missouri area with a knowledge of local caves suitable for a photo trip is especially welcome to volunteer.

You may submit your abstracts to me by written letter, fax, e-mail or on floppy disk. I use a Mac computer and can translate from PC to Mac. E-mail, if you have it, is the fastest and easiest way to submit to me and makes my life a lot easier, but any form will do.

The Photo Workshops are only as successful as we make them ourselves. Please feel free to step forward and volunteer some of your time and expertise to make this convention's workshop presentations the best we've ever had. I look forward to hearing from you at your earliest convenience.

Peter Jones  
Vice Chairperson  
NSS Photo Section  
71643.3236@compuserve.com

## Special Pre-Publication Prices for Cave Minerals of the World

The long-awaited second edition of *Cave Minerals of the World* by Carol Hill and Paolo Forti is now in full production. The new edition features:

- \* Over 300 full color photos
- \* Special new section--The Top

Ten Caves in the World,  
Mineralogically

\* Completely updated text

\* Worldwide coverage

\* Expanded Special Topics  
Sections

\* Hardcover binding

\* More than 4,400 references

Special pre-publication prices have  
been established as follows:

January through March, 1997: \$50;  
Pre-Publication Special Price April  
through July, 1997: \$60; Pre-  
Publication Special Price After  
August 1, 1997 \$70 suggested retail  
price.

The book will be available in mid-  
August 1997. Order now at these  
special pre-publication prices and be  
assured of a copy. The first edition  
sold out almost immediately.

You can order by E-mail and pay  
by credit card. For shipping in the U.  
S., please add \$5. For international  
shipments, inquire by E-mail for the  
exact shipping cost.

You can also pick up your copy at  
the International Congress of  
Speleology in August in Switzerland,  
if you'll be attending. If you'd like to  
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## Oversized Battery Update

Compiled by Chad Fenner from  
various sources.

The following message was  
received from Duracell by Brian  
Braye in response to a question he  
sent them about their new batteries  
not fitting certain devices:

"Thank you for your message.  
Consumers don't always take the  
time to share their thoughts with us,

and we do appreciate your  
comments.

"All batteries, ours and those of  
other manufacturers, must adhere to  
certain dimensions and standards.  
While our batteries are, indeed,  
within the specification range, we  
have just learned of a potential fit  
issue which appears to affect an  
isolated number of older style Mini-  
Maglites.

"We regret that you are dissatisfied  
with our PowerCheck batteries,  
please send us the batteries along  
with your flashlights (if damaged)  
indicating replacement cost. Please  
call us on our toll-free number  
(800/551-2355), which is accessible  
from the USA and Canada if you  
would like to receive a prepaid  
mailing label. Please send a copy of  
this internet with your  
correspondence.

"I look forward to hearing from you."

Several other people on Cavers  
Digest reported similar responses  
from Duracell. (As a side note, Brian  
visited the EverReady Web Site to  
send them the same question, but  
got distracted downloading a "really  
cool" EverReady Bunny screen  
saver.)

In a later posting to the mailing list,  
Brian noted that he found out at a  
local Walmart that after they open  
disposable cameras for developing,  
they discard half-used AA batteries.  
Seems like a waste, huh?

Also, on the oversized battery  
problem, several people noted that  
the batteries also get stuck in several  
GPS units, including the Garmin38  
GPS unit. Apparently, the 4 AA  
batteries become wedged.

As a solution to the mag light  
problem, one person offered to  
machine out the inside of a maglight  
for only \$4.50 per unit. (Wait, how  
much does a new one cost?) More to  
come, I'm sure.

## This Space for Sale!

That's what you may be seeing if a

motion made by Russell Hill last  
month carries.

Russell motioned that the grotto  
sell add space to someone willing to  
"sponsor" a color cover. ("This  
months cover brought to you by . . .")

The grotto was generally in  
agreement that this was a good idea.  
A color cover would cost about \$50  
to \$75 dollars to produce and copy,  
and everyone seemed to feel that  
half a page run for six months would  
be a fair exchange. Russell said  
that, as a business man, he would be  
willing to pay for that.

There was one concern that if a  
commercial venture paid for a color  
cover then they might press for a  
cover that highlights their product.  
We all agreed that the cover would  
have to be related to caving and that  
the newsletter editor had final say in  
the photo used. (Editor's note - I did  
say that if Russell had a picture of an  
emu in a cave I'd publish it!)

There was a contrasting view that if  
ad space was sold it should go into  
the grotto treasury and additional  
color covers would be addressed as  
monies became available.

As the newsletter editor, here is my  
take on the subject. We have some  
really great talent in our grotto, from  
photography to photo editing and  
desktop layout. I think we have the  
ability to become recognized for our  
efforts if we want to. I like the idea of  
having "sponsors" for individual  
covers. It could be an enticement to  
get organizations to sponsor  
additional covers.

Think about it, and well talk about it  
more at the next grotto meeting.

**Maverick Grotto  
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