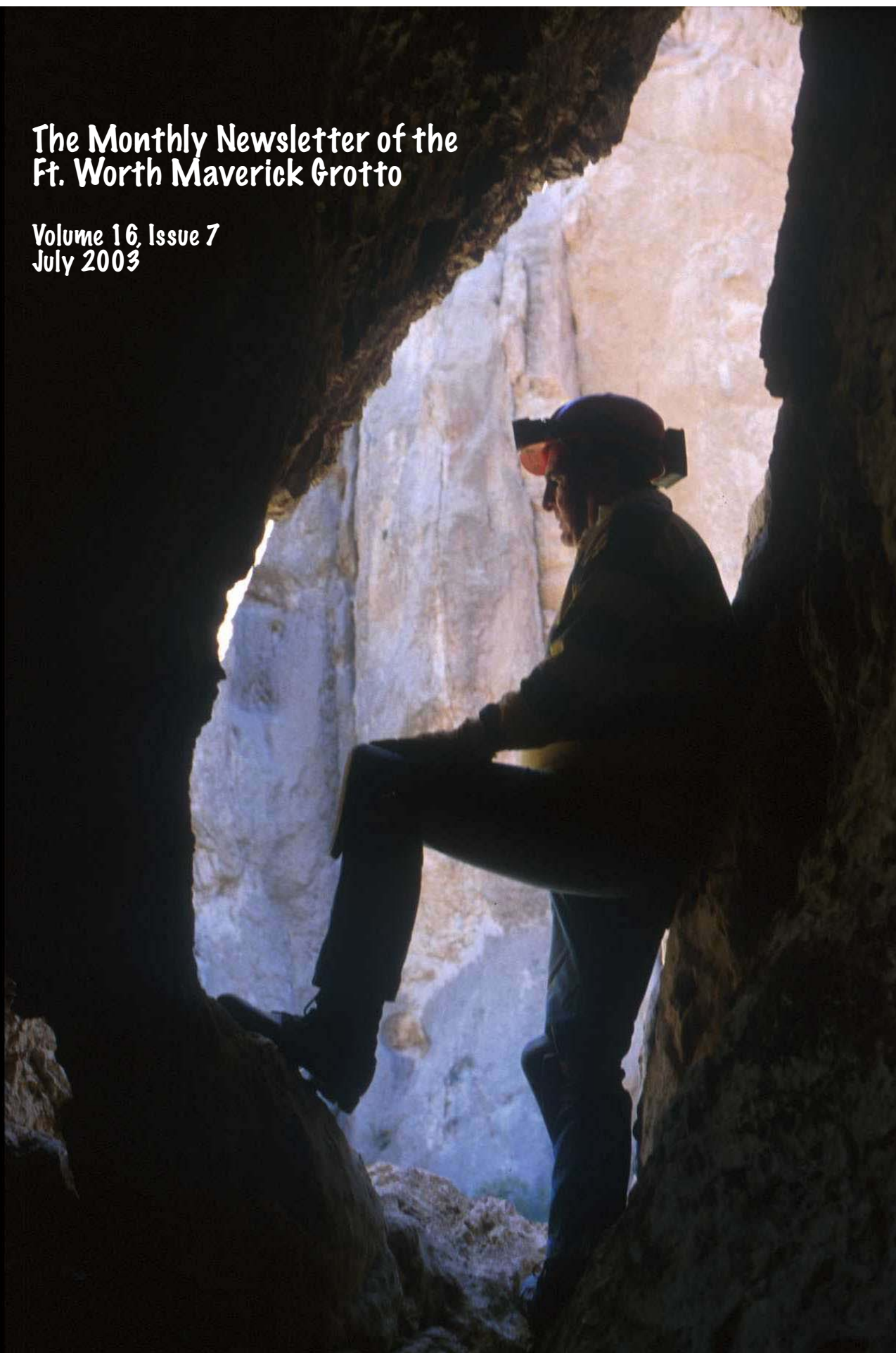


**THE
MAVERICK
BULL**

The Monthly Newsletter of the
Ft. Worth Maverick Grotto

Volume 16, Issue 7
July 2003



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The Maverick Bull is the monthly newsletter of the Maverick Grotto, an internal organization of the National Speleological Society (NSS G-322). The editor invites all individuals and other grottos to submit articles, news, maps, cartoons, art, photographs, and other two- and three-dimensional goodies. If the material is to be returned, a self-addressed stamped envelope should accompany it.

Reprinting Articles: Internal organizations of the National Speleological Society may reprint any item (unless copyrights belong to the author as stated in the byline) first appearing in the Maverick Bull if proper credit is given and a complete copy of the publication is delivered to the editor at the time of publication. Other organizations should contact the editor of the Maverick Bull at the address herein.

Exchanges: The Maverick Grotto will exchange newsletters with other grottos. Contact the editor.

Complimentary Newsletters: The Maverick Grotto will provide complimentary newsletters to persons or organizations that provide cave access (i.e. landowners) or otherwise provide assistance to cavers. The Maverick Grotto will provide one free issue to persons interested in becoming members.

Subscription Rates: Subscription rates are \$15 per year for nonmembers and free for members.

Membership Policy: Any individual with interests, beliefs, and actions consistent with the purposes of the Maverick Grotto and the National Speleological Society is eligible for membership. Acceptance of new members is based on payment of dues and a mandatory three-trip requirement with at least three different grotto members. These three members shall act as sponsors. At least one sponsor must attend the meeting at which the membership vote is taken. A two-thirds majority vote of the members present will be required for acceptance.

Meetings: Meetings are held the second

Tuesday of each month at Smokey's Ribs, 5300 E. Lancaster, Fort Worth. It is located less than one mile west of Loop 820. The time is 7 p.m., and the food is good.

Carbide: Currently carbide is unavailable.

Library: Support your grotto library. Russell Hill is accepting books, magazines, and videos related to caves and caving for our library. Thanks to Russell for his efforts in transporting the library collection to meetings.

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Photos and Artwork

Cover photo: by Keith Heuss

Pages 5, 6 & 7: by Mark Gee

Pages 4, 5, 6 & 7: maps by Mark Gee

Visit Our NEW Web Site!

Check out the site at its new location:

maverickgrotto.org

About the cover

According to Keith Heuss: "The cover is a picture of one of the entrances to Three Dog Cave, located in Big Bend National Park. It was taken in December 2001, and I don't know the identity of the person in the photo. I took the picture during the project that we have held at the park now for 5 years, except for last year. We will be going back to the park during the Christmas Holidays this year."

June Meeting Minutes

The meeting was called to order after 7 p.m. by Ed Goff.

Visitors: Diane Kirkpatrick, Michelle Motrall.

Announcements: newsletter contributions will be cheerfully accepted, and are needed for the July edition. An Open House for the Texas Speleological Society will take place in Austin on Saturday, June 14th.

Old business: The subject of grotto T-shirts was tabled for this month. The grotto has raised \$175 from individual members for the NSS Great Expectations Cave Purchase Fund. Karen Perry moved to match the \$175 with additional funds from the grotto treasury. The motion was approved unanimously; the Maverick Grotto will send \$350 to the NSS Great X Fund.

New business: Dave Gers announced that he cancelled the Maverick Grotto participation in the Dallas Museum of Natural History Outdoor Adventure Day due to lack of interest amongst grotto members. A lengthy discussion ensued about methods for attracting new members to the grotto and ways to quickly get them involved in grotto activities. Suggestions

July Meeting

The program for the July meeting will either be slides of caving trips to Nuevo León by Ed Goff, or a program on Alaska by Phil Sanders and a guest. Either should be great, so be sure to join us at Smokey's! to find out!

included preparing a brochure about beginning caving to leave at local retailers such as REI. Karen Perry moved to create a "New Membership" committee composed of herself, Phil Sanders, Mark Gee, and Dan Smith.

Trip reports: Bill Tucker discussed his latest trip to Phantom Cave, where he discovered a new "cave critter." This was a troglodyte (planthopper) that he found above the water level, and according to James Reddell is normally found in Hawaii. Milo went caving in San Saba County on private property, where the group went into 8 or 9 pits, found a total of about 20 caves, some of which had fleas and bad air. Two dead raccoons were also located. Milo also went to the Guads and visited Cottonwood and Hidden caves. Mark Gee did a through trip of Honey Creek with the Houston Grotto. Kurt Menking is willing to host a joint trip of Honey Creek with the San Antonio, DFW and Maverick grottos sometime this winter. Mark also attended the Kickapoo Caverns State Park Project, where he surveyed six new caves (see the feature article in this issue).

Trip announcements: Fourth annual TAG trip, June 14-20. Bill Tucker plans on going to San Saba County again, and Karen Perry plans to obtain permits for a beginner's trip to the Guads for mid July.

The grotto "lottery" items were a map of Carlsbad Caverns National Park and a caver painting by Christopher Fenner. These two items netted the grotto \$25!

The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 pm. Ed Goff presented slides from the Cueva del Tecolote expedition in March.

Are You a Good Trip Leader?

by Karen Perry
NSS #45977

If you are like me, there is no better caving than in southeastern New Mexico, especially if you have visited caves like Wind (also known as Hick's Cave), Hell Below, Cottonwood, Pink Dragon and Pink Panther, Black, Three Fingers, Virgin, Endless, McKittrick and Sand Caves. Caving in New Mexico is extraordinary. Remember the first time (or even your last) that you stood below Goliath marveling at the sheer size of the world's second largest free-standing stalagmite? Wow! What a spiritual experience. Have you ever felt the hair on the back of your neck stand tall as a cold wind brushed by you in the humid heat of Black and found yourself wondering if it was a ghost of long ago? These caves leave lasting impressions on cavers just as the Bible leaves imprints on Christians. And now they need our help!

Cave Specialists of the varying permitting agencies are all alarmed at the carelessness of many trip leaders (TL's). Complaints range from not staying on the trail, climbing on formations, leaving trash and careless eating in the caves, not watching cave packs or spotting people as they move through tight places, and so on (most of you know of what I speak, therefore no preaching!).

Trip Leaders are the cave's first line of defense against outside intrusion. Responsibility for the group and the cave rest on the TL--when does this responsibility begin? It starts with the phone call to get the permit. Knowing that different agencies have different permit requirements and that not everything is in writing is invaluable information. Before closing the permit call, ask if there are any special requirements of which you may not be aware. Is a hand line preferred or are free climbs okay? Are there any changes of note or things for which to be on the look

out? The Cave Specialist issuing the permits appreciates this and it can go a long way in getting special access some day. Don't leave yourself open to possible disasters. Ask questions while on the phone, even if you have been in the cave many times. Things can and do change and the paperwork does not always reflect this situation.

TL's should do their best to sign up only those with the skill levels required for each cave and be willing to follow any guidelines that have been established. This means even TL's need to get clearance before deviating from the norm. Trip Leaders have tremendous responsibilities, as the safety and actions of the group are up to them. If a group member is being unsafe, or not being careful and causing damage to the cave, the TL needs to be willing to correct that person or even abort the trip if necessary (sometimes this is harder than we think, and our caving friends can even get mad at us as TLs). Part of being a good TL is doing the right thing for the cave first and the group's fun and entertainment should come as a secondary consideration.

Organizing the trip, including coordinating food and transportation are part of being a trip leader, too. Making sure people know the proper clothing and camping gear to bring and informing the group about weather expectations during the trip is important. Does each person have non-marking soles on their boots, including you as the TL? Does every one have the appropriate gear, including at least three separate source of light (not carbide, which isn't allowed in New Mexico caves).

The National Outdoor Leadership School (NOLS) has published the *Leave No Trace Outdoor Skills & Ethics Book to Caving*. All Trip Leaders to New Mexico caves are asked to follow these guidelines regardless of experience/skill level of participants. In fact, the higher the skill level of the participants, the more the Cave Specialist expects from you as a good TL.

Don't be complacent. These caves are still experiencing damage! Yes, cavers are trying to correct the sins of the past, but we are still allowing ourselves through negligence to destroy the very caves we hold so dear and try to protect. Look at how you manage trips out to the Carlsbad area. Analyze what you can do to improve your trips by making them fun, safe and non-damaging.

High Guads Restoration Project

by Jennifer Foote, Susan Herpin
highguads@yahoo.com

[Editor's note: this is a posting to CaveTex from early June. While the specific details may be different for the July project, much of this information will still be relevant for the next HGRP weekend trip on July 26-27.]

WHAT WE DID the last few months: Yes I am way behind on everything. In April I think we went to Three Fingers, Hell Below, Second Parallel, Wonderland, and Black. In May, Tom Bemis came up from the Park to do rescue training for trip leaders.

PLANS FOR July: I don't know about any plans. All permits are subject to cancellation, and are dependent upon an approved project leader accompanying each group.

SIGN UP FOR JULY:

Please e-mail Jennifer Foote/Susan Herpin (highguads@yahoo.com) if you'd like to participate by SUNDAY July 20. When you sign up, please answer the following questions to help us plan:

- What days are you able to work (full day/half day)?
- Are you vertically proficient?
- Do you have a preference of which cave you work in? Happy

volunteers are more productive volunteers!

-Please let me know if you are under 18, since anyone under 18 is limited to horizontal caving projects.

-Are you willing to do a long hike, or would you prefer something closer?

-Do you have previous restoration experience?

In order to volunteer in a vertical cave, each caver must have a complete set of vertical gear that they have previously used in another cave, not just in practice.

WHERE AND WHEN:

Unless you are notified otherwise, we'll meet at Texas Camp at 9:00 am Saturday morning for orientation, safety meetings and final cave assignments. Saturday will be full day trips; Sunday will have options for shorter trips, since most people will need to drive home.

Please bring a set of restoration gear (i.e. sponge and bucket, spray bottle, nylon scrub brush, toothbrush, whisk broom, plastic scraper, baster, etc.), as plans often change at the last minute. Restoration water can be obtained from the Queen Administrative Site water spigot in thoroughly clean containers. Bottled Distilled (not spring or drinking) water is also acceptable.

No fire restrictions are currently in effect.

PLEASE REQUEST DIRECTIONS TO TEXAS CAMP IF YOU NEED THEM.

CAVE DESCRIPTIONS:

HELL BELOW - Impact mapping in Hell Below under Project Leader Mike Mansur. Hell Below has a short hike and is a vertical cave with a rebelay and about a 90' free drop.

PINK DRAGON - Post closure monitoring under the direction of project leader Eddie Baker. Pink Dragon has a four-mile round trip hike, one mile there and three back. The cave is horizontal.

HIDDEN CAVE - Finish up impact mapping under Project Leader Mike Mansur, and possibility to continue with the flowstone cleaning. Hidden has a short hike, less than half a mile, with about 200' of elevation loss, and a short, 60' entrance drop. In cave travel is extremely easy, on packed dirt that almost seems paved. There is water for flowstone cleaning in the cave, but participants will need a complete set of restoration gear.

PINK PANTHER - routine flowstone cleaning to narrow the trails will continue under the direction of project leader Jennifer Foote. Pink Panther has a four-mile round trip hike, one mile there and three back. There is a short vertical drop of about 30' to 40' not far inside the entrance. In cave travel is fairly easy, with little or no climbing needed to reach the resto sites in the lower level of the cave. There is a small amount of water in the cave, but no other restoration gear. Each participant will need a full set of gear.

COTTONWOOD CAVE - formation cleaning will continue under the direction of Project Leader Jennifer Foote. Cottonwood is a horizontal cave, with a short, quarter mile hike, with about 200' of elevation loss. Participants will need to bring a complete set of restoration gear.

WONDERLAND SECTION OF COTTONWOOD CAVE - formation cleaning will continue under the direction of Project Leader Jennifer Foote. Many areas of Wonderland are extremely delicate, and prior restoration experience will be required for all participants. Cottonwood is a horizontal cave, with a short, quarter mile hike, with about 200' of elevation loss. In cave travel to the work site involves real caving, lots of climbing and crawling. Participants will need to bring a complete set of restoration gear.

BLACK CAVE - a monitoring trip, with any needed repairs to trail flagging, is a possibility for Sunday. Black is a horizontal cave, with a half-mile, mostly level hike.

THREE FINGERS - Three Fingers is a strenuous hike, about half a mile with 800' of elevation loss (which means uphill all the

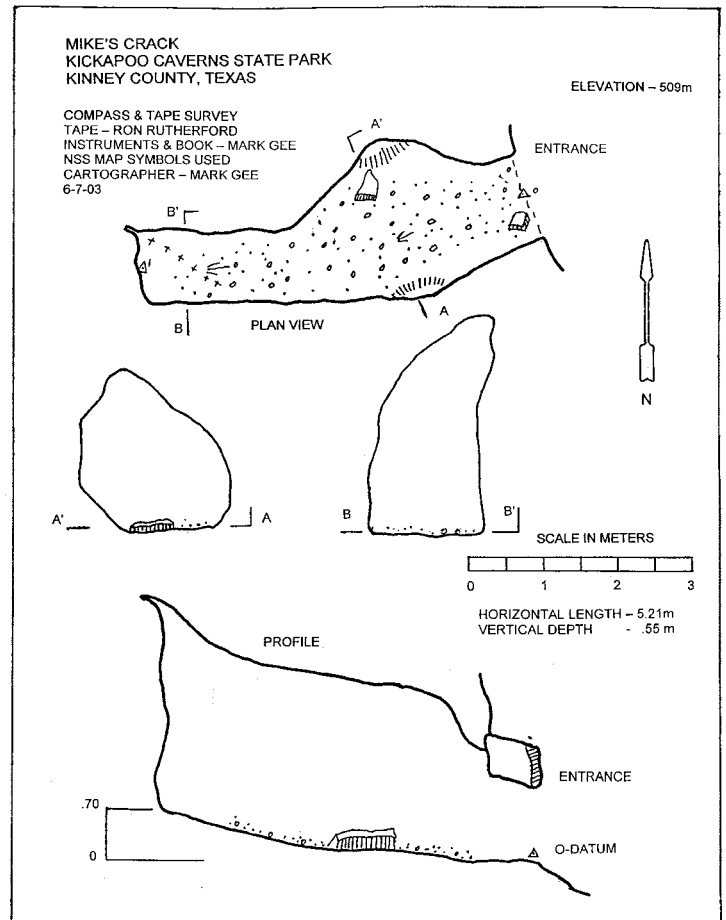
way out). The cave is vertical, with an entrance drop of about 90', with a rebelay to cross after 30'. The work sites are a short distance into the cave.

Kickapoo Caverns Karst Survey Project

by Mark Gee NSS #49625

About fifteen people got together on June 6th, 2003 with several tasks to accomplish. Six caves had been found earlier that morning that needed to be surveyed. Other known caves had to be found and GPS locations taken. Ridge walking needed to be done, as only fifteen percent of the park has ever been checked. Still other caves needed maps drawn from old survey data. It was helpful to go and explore these caves with the survey notes to see how the caves looked. Jim Kennedy had talked to me about the new caves he had found and told me that these needed to be surveyed. I decided to survey these six small caves.

The drive down from Dallas was long. To make the drive a little more pleasant and cost-efficient, Dr. Rafal Kedzierski and I rode down together. The small towns were zipping by until a local county sheriff decided he wanted to meet me. He asked for my license and walked back to his patrol car. He came back after running my license and told me to slow it down a little. I said, "Thank you," and we proceeded on down the road towards Mason. The countryside began to get much hillier. Limestone began to break the surface here and there. Soon small mountains

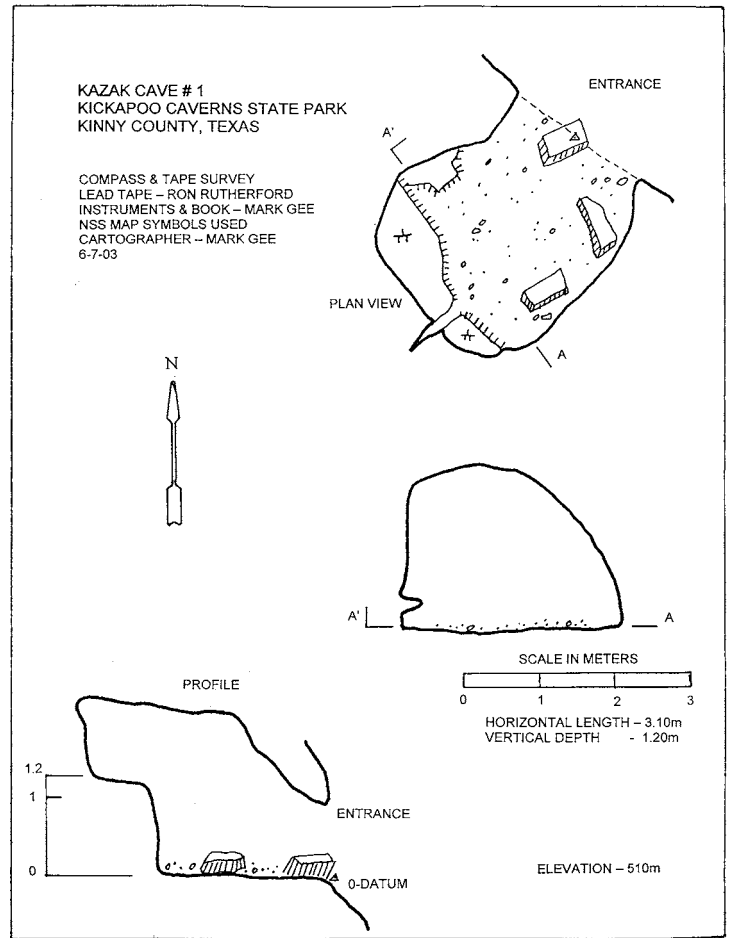




The entrance to Mike's Crack Cave.

began to appear around Junction. We stopped in Junction to eat barbecue and when we left, night had fallen. On through Rocksprings, the roads got narrow, curvy, and hilly. A roadside sign said "Open Range to Cattle." I slowed down when I saw this, and it was a good thing because a small herd of cattle was standing right in the middle of the road a few miles further. They all were dark in color, and I just missed hitting three steers. I slowed some more and we drove on to arrive at the park at 10:45 pm.

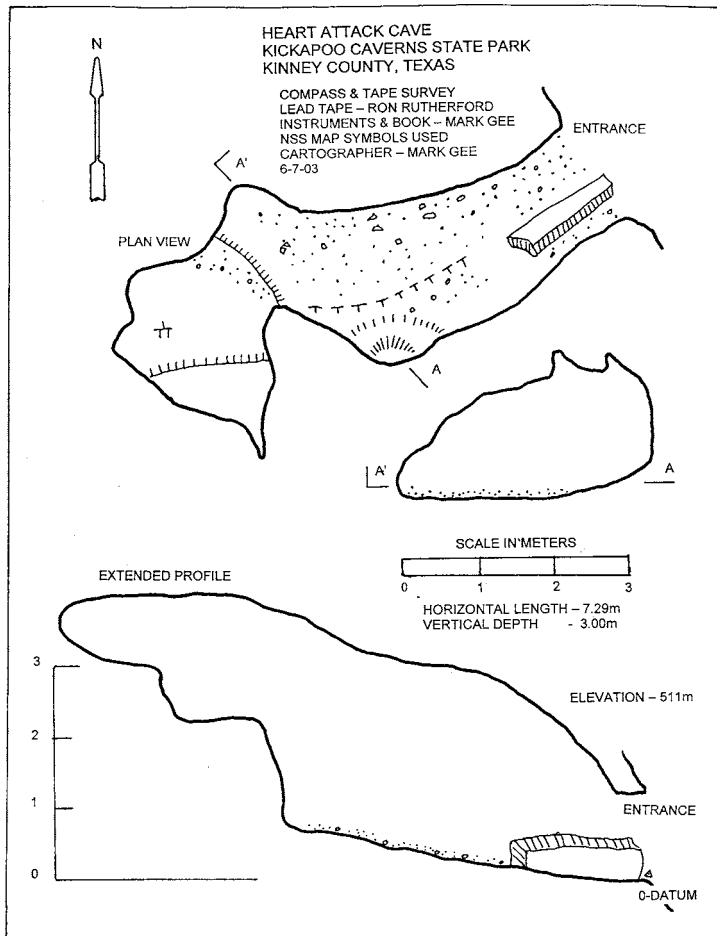
Rafal and I began to set up camp when Kurt Menking came



over and told us we could stay in the bunkhouse. This was a big help, we had no camp to set up.

Saturday morning as usual came all too quickly as I was up at seven. Others began to stir as I banged a few pans together while fixing my breakfast. With the smell of hot spicy bratwurst and eggs, the rest were up soon.

Let's go caving now! By 8:45 everyone had decided what he or she would be doing. Kurt showed Ron Rutherford and myself the location of the six small caves Jim Kennedy had told me about. Arriving at the first cave, we quickly got out the survey gear and got right to work, I mean got to play. The caves were

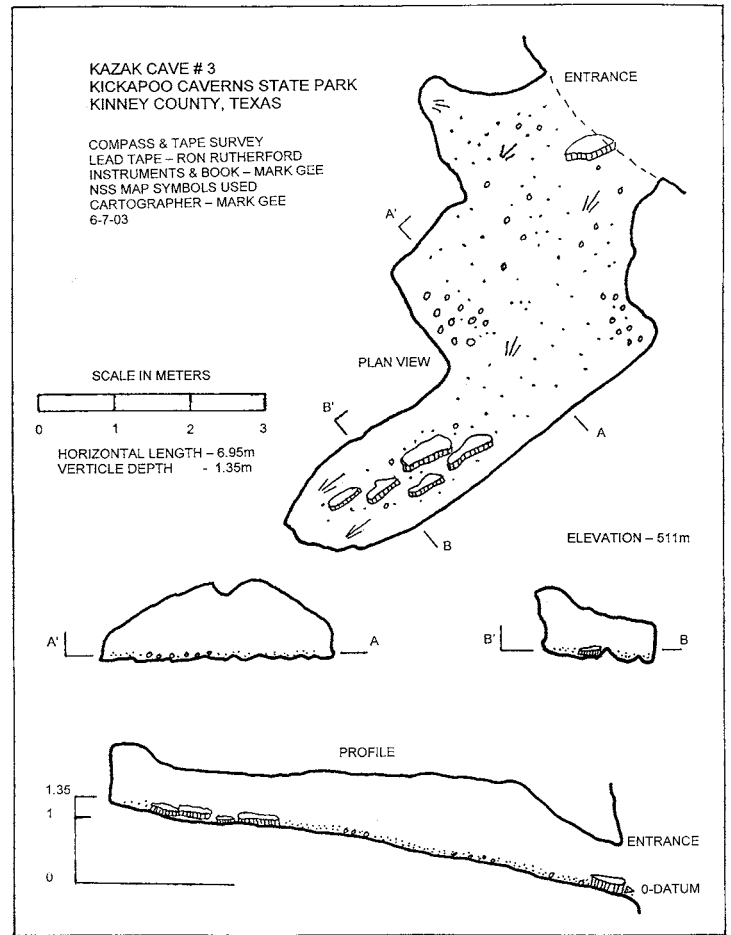
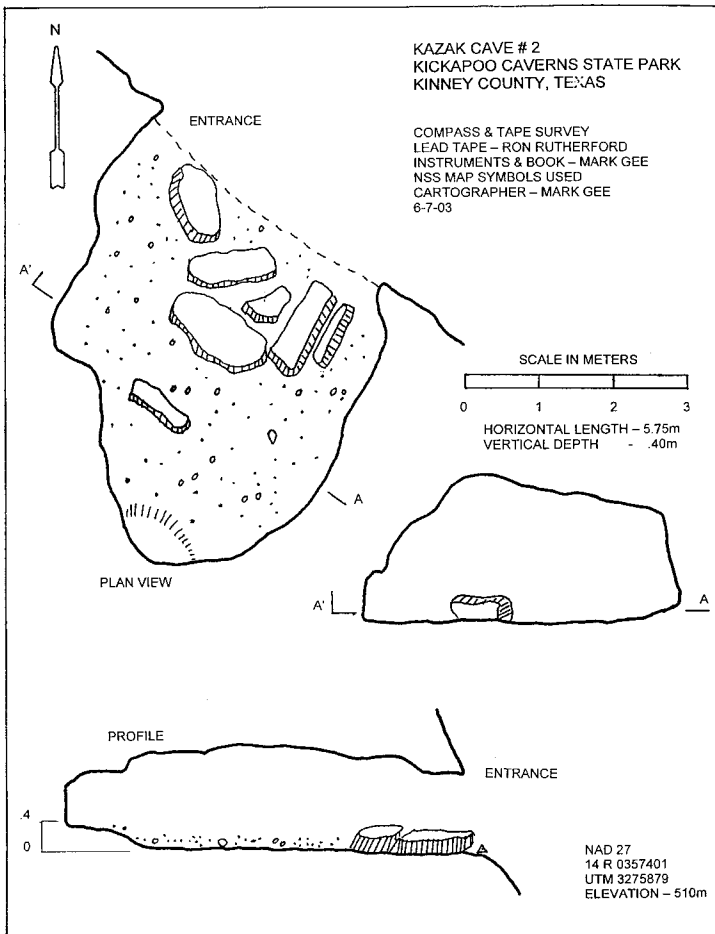


Heart Attack Cave Entrance.



The entrance to Kazak #3 Cave.

along the base of a small mountain. Each cave was only fifteen to thirty feet above the valley floor. The first cave, named Mike's Crack, had an entrance about one meter tall by one and a half meters wide. The dirt and cobble floor sloped up as the ceiling rose. The length of the cave was only 5.2 meters. Many harvestman spiders and crickets covered the ceiling. As you crawled under them, many would fall on the back of your neck. The second cave was west and a little higher up the hillside. Heart Attack Cave was so named because when it was discovered by the Park Ranger's wife the previous day, a porcupine had



scared the ---- out of her. Several trees framed the cave entrance, and its opening was 1.5 meters wide by 1.5 meters tall. A large rock at the drip line became our first survey station. Our second station was on a shelf 5.25 meters away. The cave was tall enough to stand at this point. The cave made a 70-degree turn to the left and ended at another shelf 2 meters further. The floor was covered with dry goat scat. With this cave mapped, we went looking for the next cave.

Kazak #1 Cave was found after walking 250 feet through the thick undergrowth, beneath the oak trees. This cave was smaller than the first two, as it tapered in at 3.10 meters. Its entrance was



Under a ledge between Heart Attack and Kazak #1 Cave.

2 meters wide by 1 meter tall. At the end of the cave was a rock shelf, and on the right wall at the floor was eroded limestone that resembled a petrified wood tree trunk. The floor was covered with cobbles, dirt, and a lot more goat scat. More of the same critters covered the rock ceiling. Twenty-five feet further to the west and ten feet up the slope was the fourth cave. Kazak #2 Cave had a wide 4-meter by 1.5-meter tall entrance. The cave was mostly level, with a slight rise at the back end of this huge, 5.75 meter long cave. This cave had several large pieces of breakdown that covered the floor.

The next cave, Kazak #3, was another forty feet along the strike to a nice entrance. The width was a little more than two meters wide and one meter tall. The cave sloped up at 13.0 degrees. The floor was more dirt, cobbles, and scat. It ended in breakdown after 6.5 meters. The scat almost covered the floor.

The next and last cave, Kazak #4, was another sixty feet along the face of the mountain. This monster tapped in at 6.91 meters in length. On the right wall was a small amount of flowstone. This cave had a low entrance and the remainder of the cave was also low. The average height of this cave was 0.5 meters. The floor was covered with scat and the fleas were thick. The cave had crickets, harvestmen, millipedes, fleas, spiders and two different beetles feeding on the scat and any caver that happened to be lying around. So we quickly did our survey and the sketch, and left the cave.

I had wanted to get pictures of all the entrances and had forgotten to do so at every cave. I went back to four of the six entrances and got the photos that I wanted. Then Ron, his son and myself headed back to camp for lunch. Back at camp, the discussion was about the other things that needed to be done. Kurt asked if I wanted to go help with finding two caves, so a GPS reading could be taken. We had a map that showed where the caves were located, but it still took a little doing to find them. The first cave we looked for was Pocket Cave. Travis Scott had asked me to draw a map from the old survey notes that Linda Palit and Jerry Atkinson had written in 1988. I wanted to look at the cave so I would be familiar with it, to make drafting the map easier.

It took us about twenty minutes to locate the cave. Kurt had found it and yelled for Travis and I to come over. We walked over to the cave and I looked at a very small entrance. It was very hot and I knew it would be cooler in that cave. I turned on my Duo light and found that the entrance was just big enough for me to get down. I slid down the slick walls about ten feet. The only problem was that the cave didn't get any bigger. I yelled to Travis to bring me the sketch of the cave. I reached up, got the sketch

from Travis and began looking at it.

"Let's see here, where's the scale? This part is 0.7 meters, 0.8 meters here, 0.5 meters here. How tall is this cave? Here it's 0.5 meters, maybe 0.7 meters here. It's not even a meter tall! I'm not going down this cave. The sketch looks good. I can draw up a map from this. I'm coming out."

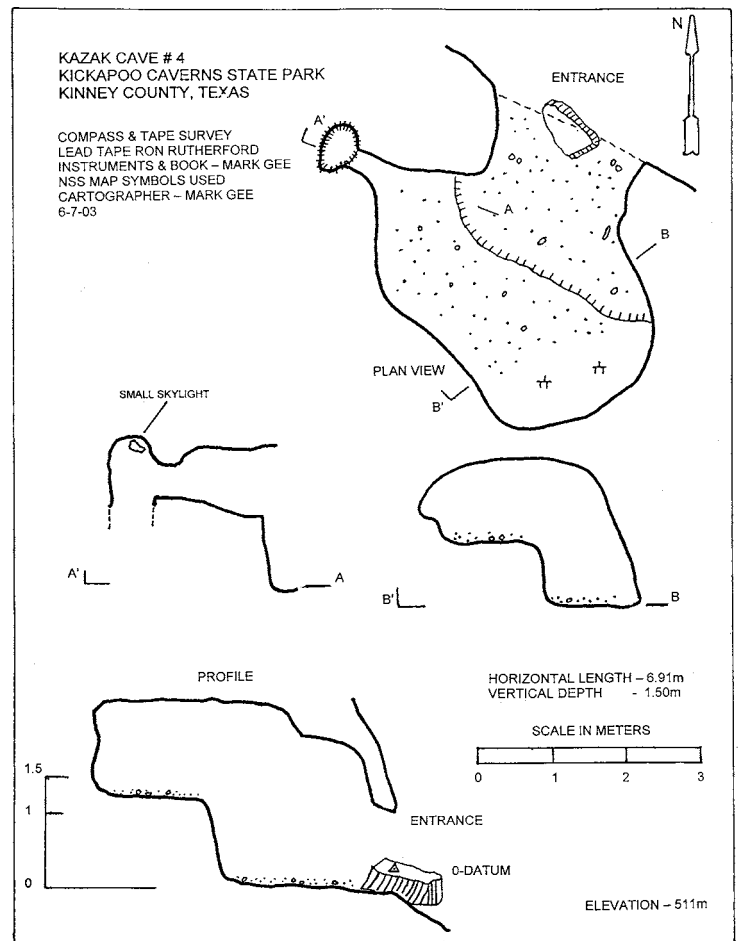
So with a great deal of effort, with my arms pinned to my side, I squeezed back up and out the entrance to the laughter of Kurt and Travis. I asked if either one of them wanted to go inside the cave. They both had some reason for not wanting to torture their bodies.

We headed back to the car and drove over to find Jack in the Crack Cave. After about fifteen minutes, I found it and yelled to the others to come. I waited till I saw them coming before I climbed down into the cave. The cave had a five-foot diameter entrance that dropped straight down for fifteen feet to a low pancake-shaped room. As I neared the cave floor I began to hear some hissing. "Something's in there." I thought it was a baby buzzard, but I wasn't sure. After a few seconds, my desire to see the cave overcame my fear of the unknown critter. I stepped down on the floor and looked around to find what was hissing at me. Behind a rock pendant were two baby buzzards, with their wings spread wide, trying to look fierce! They never stopped hissing.

I began looking around the room. The ceiling was between two and four feet tall and the room's diameter was thirty feet. At one end of the room, the floor sloped down to end in rock fall with no airflow detected. It didn't appear to continue. At the other side of the room, a couple of small openings in the floor appeared to drain to a much larger opening that spiraled down fifteen feet out of sight. It appeared to be filled with debris, but it will need to be checked by a smaller caver. The original map did not appear to show this passage going down. Maybe it has opened up since



Ron Rutherford and son
at the entrance to Kazak #4 Cave.



the cave map was done back in 1988. A new survey should be done that shows this passage.

I climbed back out and we returned to camp. Earlier in the day, Kurt had talked to the Park Ranger about the group going into Kickapoo Caverns. He said, "That will be fine, but don't go into the Helictite Room, it's too delicate."

At five pm, everyone in camp loaded up in three cars to drive to the parking area below the cave. Travis Scott, Kurt Menking, and James Lopez wanted to do some video and photography in the cave. Several of the others were asked to carry in camera gear and help with lighting while the photos were taken.

The cave is 1,200 feet long and at least 100 feet across, with a ceiling height of 20 to 100 feet. Several large columns, one of which is pictured on the cover of the 1994 NSS Convention Book, were seen. My little camera wouldn't come close to photographing these huge formations. I had to settle for much smaller pictures, such as the beautiful helictites along the walls and the more decorated areas near the Graffiti Room at the back of the cave. After several hours of photography and exploring, we left the cave.

Back at camp, everyone began getting their hot showers and their dinners prepared. I had brought two delicious rib-eye steaks and a couple of baked potatoes. "Life is good!" I was stuffed after dinner. It was time for a cold one.

It had been a long day, but a good day. Six caves surveyed, several caves relocated and GPS coordinates were taken. Several acres had been ridge-walked and a successful photo trip into Kickapoo Caverns was shot. What a big borehole cave it is! I look forward to the next Kickapoo Caverns Karst Survey. Thanks go to the Park Ranger and to the State of Texas Parks Department for allowing us to help with this project. It's a worthwhile project and could lead (and has lead) to more new cave discoveries.

Till Next Time! Happy Caving!

Newsletter Exchange Review

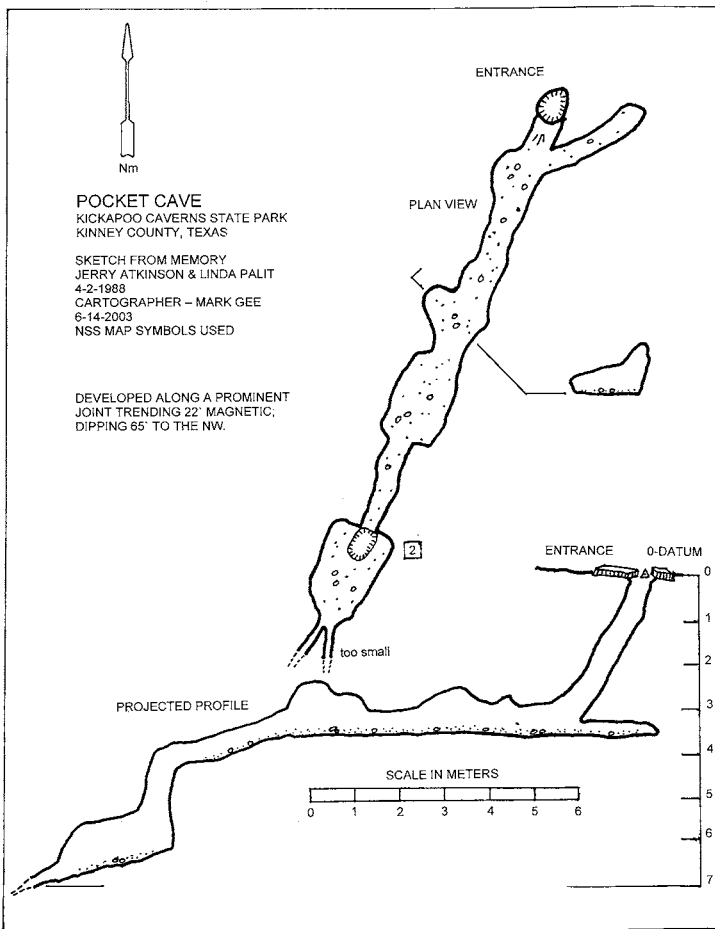
by R.D. Milhollin, NSS 29962

NSS News June 2003 (Vol. 61 No. 06)

The lead story in this month's *News* is *Oregon Caves National Monument – Resource Management Problems* by Steve Knutson. The article is of interest due to the circumstances surrounding the problems. Knutson is one of the original explorers of the system, located in the northwest US state, and is unhappy with the way the National Park Service has been managing things there for some time. The NPS is planning to solicit input from cavers at the 2003 NSS Convention in California to prepare a new management plan, and Knutson says he wants to be sure any caver who participates knows his and other local cavers' point of view. The cave itself is a solution cave formed in marble 4000 feet up on the side of a mountain. Since the cave became a national monument, private companies ran all the concessions, including cave tours. This arrangement continued after the site was taken over by the NPS. Knutson contends that the concessionaire allowed tour groups that are too large to be properly supervised, and that this resulted in large lint accumulations and disfigured formations, even off-trail. In the 1980's changes took place, with new park personnel and a new policy of ranger-led tour groups and expansion of the site to include karst watershed protection as part of the overall plan. The cave has multiple entrances, and in 1997 after delicate formations were noticed missing from the cave, Knutson discovered that access security to the caves was virtually nonexistent. A proposed "spelunker tour" through a delicate and potentially important paleontological deposit prompted Knutson to ask for a copy of a required environmental impact statement for the tour. He discovered that these NEPA reports were not being prepared at all for any aspect of the cave. Further investigations discovered significant discrepancies with park plans for tour routes, unauthorized removal of cave sediments, and guides offering formations as souvenirs. Knutson makes specific suggestions for changes to the park's management plans, and for questions to be asked of officials at the Convention meeting. He lists pertinent contacts at the end of the article. Be aware that some of the article is filled with government agency acronyms that might make reading a little tedious. Particularly the term "NEPA" (National Environmental Policy Act of 1969) is never specified in the article.

Environmental concerns as they affect publicly owned caves is again the topic in *The Probable Effect of Thoroughbred on Mammoth Cave National Park* penned by Roger Brucker. The author begins with a recitation of existing pollution in the area, including air and water, and goes on to conclude that political paybacks to large coal companies are responsible for approved plans for the 1500 megawatt Thoroughbred generating plant to be built by Peabody Coal only 50 miles west of Mammoth. The plant is expected to generate huge quantities of carbon dioxide, sulfur gasses, nitrogen compounds, and heavy metals like mercury. Peabody is being sued by the Sierra Club, and has refused to consider incorporating available pollution control technology into its plans. Brucker details damages caused by the various forms of pollution the plant will add to the existing mix. His article is easy reading, not chocked with a lot of obscure terminology, and appeals to the emotional as well as logical senses. He concludes with an appeal for funds to be donated to the Sierra Club's defense of this natural wonder.

Cave diver and biologist Buford Pruitt contributes a vignette dealing with reservation styled around his own experiences at Romulus and Remus Cave in Levy County Florida. Turtles populated the two water-filled sinkholes that the submerged cave connected, and the entire property is on a cattle ranch. The rancher is generous in allowing neighbors to access the lake, and allowed a cave diving friend of Pruitt's to dive there. He was allowed to bring other divers, and things were going fine until someone shot all the turtles. The landowner did not know who did it, but as Pruitt explains it, "he knows all those other people and he doesn't know us, so we're it."



In *Society News*, the NSS is looking for several vice presidents, and the Medical Section has opened its membership to all NSS members. NSS members may have noticed that their "primary affiliation" (i.e. Grotto, section, etc.) now appears on mailing labels. If you don't have a primary affiliation and would like to make it the Maverick Grotto, follow the instructions listed in the article. In other news, the National Speleological Foundation, a 501c corporation that invests money for speleological organizations including the NSS, is seeking a treasurer. And welcome back to the San Joaquin Valley Grotto, which was reorganized in March of 2003. The grotto is near the site of this year's NSS Convention, and was formerly active from the mid 1950's through the 1970's.

Cave explorer, high school teacher, and new Dalton Georgia resident David Cole recounts *Exploration of Ice Palace Cave, Marion County, Tennessee*. I met David recently at the Cheve 2003 project and was glad to introduce him to former Maverick Michael Coulter, who is the band director at David's new school. David describes the efforts he and friends made in re-checking old leads reported by other cavers, and using simple technology (hammers) to open up otherwise impassible entrances and tight spots. He includes a map of Ice Palace Cave surveyed to more than 5000 feet.

"Current technology" in flying mammal-friendly cave entrance control structures is the subject of *Shelta Cave Preserve - A Bat Friendly Fence* by Paul Meyer and John French. Shelta is the cave located under the NSS headquarters property in Huntsville, Alabama, and has been owned by the NSS since 1967. A set of "jail-bar" gates was constructed at the two entrances the following year. Since that time no significant colonies of bats have been reported there, even though there were several before the gates were installed. The aquatic life in the cave that depends on guano left behind by the bats was also noted to have significantly declined. The NSS commissioned a report on the condition of Shelta Cave in 1998, and the report was delivered in 2001. The recommendation was to replace the gates with a high fence that would be less of a barrier to bats wishing to live or hibernate in the cave. The process of gate removal and fence installation, and the people involved with this project are covered in text and in photos.

This month's featured California Convention cave is Crystal 67, or Haughton's Cave. Lisa Tesler does a great job of describing this impressive vertical marble cave located above 6000 feet in the Sierra Madre. The featured area is the Mountain Room, a large chamber with a steeply sloping floor and ceiling that requires considerable caution when traversing due to easily dislodged boulders. Tesler describes many of the features of the cave; it's history, and access arrangements during the 2003 NSS Convention. The accompanying map drawn by Bob Richards was originally published in 1982 and was felt to have set a new standard in cave cartography. Speaking of the Convention, the Planning Committee used their allotted space to cover travel directions, rules and regulations (including carbide cannons, noise, and alcohol), the luncheon being planned by the Education Division, a plead for volunteers, a cave troll spotting, a wing-ding sponsored by the Western Cave Conservancy, the recycling program, and a couple of digital cave photography clinics. Joel Despain, cave specialist for Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks, gives a rundown on caves open for visits during the convention. These include the afore-mentioned Crystal 67, Crystal Sequoia, Lilburn, Soldiers, Church, Palmer, Boyden, Thunder Canyon, Bigfoot and others in the Marble Mountains, Millerton, White Chief, Cirque, Overhang, Hidden, Greenhorn, Marble Falls, Wild Child, and Packsaddle...whew!

There are three caving-related book reviews included this month. The first is *Minnesota Underground and the Best of the Black Hills* by Doris Green for Trail Books. This guide covers 38 underground sites and features in Minnesota, 15 in South Dakota, and 4 in the border areas of Ontario Canada, Michigan, and Wisconsin. Much of the book deals with mines, some that can be toured, and one of which is deeper than any show cave in the US at -2353 feet! Reviewer Gary Soule likes the book and highly recommends it to cavers and the general public. Reviewer Bill Mixon enjoyed *The Caving Adventures of Another Pooh: Caving Explorations and Escapades* by David Yeandle. Most of the stories are set in Britain in the 1970s, and concern cave and cave diving trips told in an

amusing fashion by a "British cave bum." Mixon also gives the thumbs-up to *Life on a Line: A Manual of Modern Cave Rescue Ropework Techniques* by Dave Merchant. The price is right: it is a free PDF download, and does not deviate from the title subject [Editor's note: the 2.7 Mb PDF can be found at the following URL: <http://draftlight.net/lifeonline/>].

In *International News* The French have found the world's deepest freefall pit in China, and Nancy Pistole reports on the "final" Charco expedition which established it as the third deepest cave in Mexico. The *Spelean Spotlight* shines on Alan Cressler, a transplanted TAG caver (Georgia) now rooted in Arizona. He discusses his early interest in caves beginning at four years of age, his photography, an interest in cave archaeology, Cueva de la Villa Luz, his expertise on ferns, and much more. *Jay's Journal* mentions caves in Virginia, Minnesota, California, Wisconsin, Alabama, Pennsylvania, and Kentucky. In the *Letters* section, Matt Covington lists states arranged by number of caves and by cave mileage, only counting caves over one mile long. Texas comes in 18 and 19 respectively. Bill Mixon tries to untangle some confusion over whom and where the Association for Mexican Cave Studies (AMCS) is. Great photos as usual, including some color shots from Crystal 67. "Crack in the Ceiling," (p. 159) offers an unusual photographic perspective.

Speleospace June 2003 (Greater Houston Grotto)

Mary Smith reports on a GHG trip with Susan Herpin to the High Guads' Cave Tree Cave, a seldom-visited cave with spectacular and delicate decoration. Jessica Snyder tells the tale of a (rare?) GHG trip to the High Guads, actually the same trip as the Cave Tree Cave report. The group also visited Hidden and Black Caves, and a second part of the report is promised that will include different theories of speleogenesis in the area.

COGnizance June 2003 (Central Oklahoma Grotto)

No newsletter received this month.

The Oztotl Caver June 2003 (DFW Grotto)

Oztotl has this month off, is rumored to be on a caving vacation.

* If members of other NSS grottos and caving clubs come across this newsletter, they should encourage their newsletter editor to contact the *Maverick Bull* about the possibility of a newsletter exchange.

2003 Speleodigest Needs

Volunteers!

by Scott Fee

The NSS Speleo Digest Committee is looking for a motivated editorial team to prepare the 2003 Speleo Digest manuscript. Once the team receives all the NSS newsletters that are submitted for review during the year 2003, they are vested with selecting the relevant articles, maps, artwork, and photographs to be included in the 2003 Speleo Digest. This is a labor-intensive project.

The ideal team will have volunteers experienced as an editor-in-chief, desktop publisher, typist/scanner, and proofreader.

Interested candidates should contact scottfee@pipeline.com

More detailed information can be found at <http://www.caves.org/pub/speleodigest/>.

Caving Events Calendar, July 2003

compiled by R.D. Milhollin

- July 09** **Texas Speleological Survey Evening Work Session (Austin):** Wednesday evening work session at the TSS office in Austin, see contacts for directions. **Contacts:** Ron Ralph (512) 916-9190 ronralph@texas.net, Jim Kennedy (512) 663-2287 jkennedy@batcon.org, James Reddell (512) 471-1075 jreddell.caves@mail.utexas.edu
- July 11-13** **Trip to the High Guads for beginners.** Contact: Karen Perry (817) 309-2283
- July 12-13** **Robber Baron Cave, San Antonio:** second weekend of each month, a new and ongoing project to restore the collapsed entrance to this popular Texas cave. Initial tasks include clearing dead trees and surveying. Plans for the entrance ramp, bunker and surrounding grounds will be developed. Please contact if you are coming, and if you are bringing a truck or a chainsaw for clearing the bigger trees. **Contacts:** Linda Palit (210) 699-1388 lkpalit@swbell.net or Evelyn Mitchell, joe-evelynn@satx.rr.com
- July 18-20** **Karst 'O' Rama:** at Great Saltpeter Cave Reserve in Mt. Vernon, KY. Information: <http://www.gcgcavers.com/kor>
- July 26-27** **Government Canyon State Natural Area Project:** 20 miles northwest of San Antonio. Survey, exploration, ridge-walking, and digging. Participants must enter property with group, contact in advance for times and directions. **Contacts:** Marvin and Lisa Miller mlmiller@gvtc.com
- July 26-27** **High Guads Restoration Project:** (New Mexico): 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, see article in this issue. **Contact:** Susan Herpin or Jennifer Foote highguads@yahoo.com
- Aug 4-8** **2003 NSS Convention:** in Porterville, California. Information: <http://www.nss2003.com>
- When Scheduled **Carlsbad Caverns and Fort Stanton Cave Restoration:** New Mexico restoration trips in large, sensitive caves. CRF trips have unique requirements, long holiday weekends. **Contact:** Barbe Barker (505) 687-4270 cloudcaver@pvtnetworks.net
- When Scheduled **Val Verde and Sutton County Caves:** Sensitive landowner relations, visits by appointment only. **Contact:** R.D. Milhollin (817) 834-2327 rdmilhollin@maverickgrotto.org, rdmilhollin@academicplanet.com

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