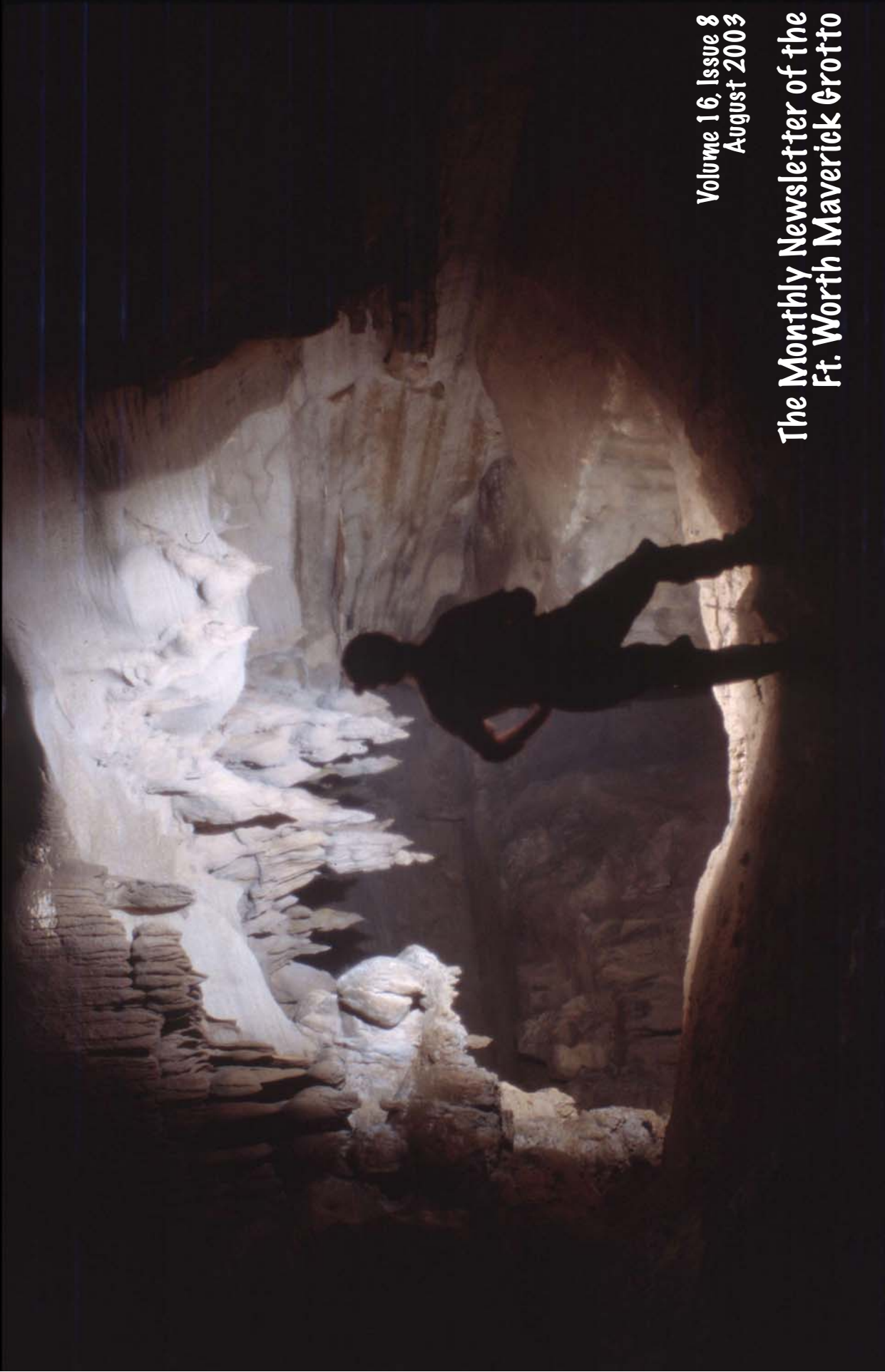


THE MAVERICK BULL



Volume 16, Issue 8
August 2003

The Monthly Newsletter of the
Ft. Worth Maverick Grotto

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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: Diana Tomchick in Howard's Waterfall Cave, by R.D. Milhollin

Page 4: all by R.D. Milhollin

Page 5: left by R.D. Milhollin, right by Diana Tomchick

Page 6: Diana Tomchick

Insert: Map of Halfhill Cave by Mark Gee

Visit Our NEW Web Site!

Check out the site at its new location:

maverickgrotto.org

Address Change

Will Harris has new digs! His address is now:

820 Downing Drive
Richardson, TX 75080
214-632-1853

July Meeting Minutes

Ed Goff called the meeting to order after 7 p.m.

Visitors: Diane and Alex Kirkpatrick, Bobby de Vos.

Announcements: newsletter contributions will be cheerfully accepted, and are needed for the August edition. As Diana will be in Europe in early September, a guest editor is needed for the September edition; R.D. Milhollin volunteered for this task. Treasurer R.D. Milhollin reports that the grotto has \$1,017.25 in the checking account and \$28.52 in cash for a grand total of \$1,045.77.

Old business: The subject of grotto T-shirts was once again tabled for this month. R.D. has cut a check from the grotto for \$350 to the NSS for the Great Expectations Cave Purchase Fund and will mail it soon. Butch Fralia has been hard at work on the website, which now seems to have 250 Mb of storage space for grotto items, including new photos. He has also scanned about 60 old newsletters from 1987 to 2001, converted them to PDF files and placed them on the website where anyone

August Meeting

The program for the August meeting was unknown at press time, but is sure to be good.

Be sure to join us at Smokey's!

may download them. He's still searching his files for many missing newsletters, and would appreciate assistance in locating old issues from other grotto members.

New business: A discussion about obtaining beginner's cave equipment from eBay culminated in a motion by Ed Goff to authorize R.D. Milhollin to pay up to \$10 for caving headlights (for a maximum of 3 lights) on eBay. Karen Perry also moved to authorize R.D. to pay up to \$30 for helmets (for a maximum of 2 helmets) on eBay. Both motions were seconded and approved unanimously.

Trip reports: R.D. Milhollin spent a week cave diving in Florida, and visited some new caves and several old favorites. R.D., Diana Tomchick and Milo Marks went out to TAG to do some caving. R.D., Diana and Michael Coulter dropped 4 big pits and survived flash flooding only for Diana to break her leg in a beginner's horizontal cave (see the feature article in this issue).

Trip announcements: Karen Perry announced that the High Guads Beginner caving trip will take place on August 1-4th, and she has permits to Cottonwood, Black, Hidden, Sentinel, Cave of the Bell and Little Beauty, among others. Each permit allows only 6 cavers per trip. Contact Karen at (817) 309-2283 for more information.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 pm. Ed Goff presented slides from caving trips to Nuevo León, México, and Jose Curras showed slides from his caving adventures in Australia.

Bustamante 2003 TSA Labor Day Project August 29 through September 1, 2003 <http://www.cavetexas.org/bustainfo.html>

[Editor's note: much of this information was obtained from CaveTex postings and the website listed above. Consult the website for detailed information.]

The deadline to pre-register is August 9, 2003.

Labor Day is coming and it's time for the annual Bustamante Project. Make your plans now and join what has become a great annual event. The Bustamante area provides a premiere trip destination for beginner as well as experienced cavers. The TSA sponsors this project to provide assistance to Mexico in cave conservation and appropriate development. Planning for the Bustamante Project 2003 is being finalized and coordination continues with the Bustamante City officials, Rogelio Rangel (the cave guide), and TSA facilitators. The Municipio de Bustamante will provide the following:

- ** Free access to the cave beginning on Friday, August 29. Most work will be done on August 30 and 31st.
- ** Free camping at the spring (ojo de agua) with brand new toilet facilities.

Registration:

**No limit to the number of participants, but pre-registration is encouraged.

**Pre-registration forms are available on the TSA website.

**Onsite registration also available on Saturday morning at the office in the parking lot at the lower cave gate.

Present plans include the following tasks:

- ** Trail building inside the cave around the "Lunch room" area.
- ** Trail building from the parking area to the cave.

- ** Graffiti removal outside the cave
- ** Graffiti removal from areas around the Cathedral Room and deeper areas of the cave.
- ** Complete informative and conservation signage inside and outside the Cave.
- ** Installation of light shields and other electrical & lighting improvements.

Information on this year's projects are outlined on the website, including graffiti removal inside and outside the cave, trail construction both inside and outside the cave, trash removal inside and outside the cave, additional conservation and directional signs and further upgrading of the lighting and electrical system. If a Grotto or other group would like to take on a task area as coordinators please contact Rune Burnett (bburnett1@austin.rr.com), Orion Knox (Orion-Knox@alumni.utexas.net) or Aimee Beveridge (aimeebbev@hotmail.com).

Information is provided on pre-registration, including a printable registration form and descriptions of Sunday and Monday field trips. Weather permitting, those who have gazed wistfully at Candela and Carrizal Mountains and wondered about the roads and buildings high on their side associated with Minas Golondrinas, will get the chance to explore this historic area. There will also be an archeology / rock art tour to Chiquihuitillo, a well-known prehistoric site in the desert west of the canyon.

For those who have participated in the past you know how rewarding and enjoyable it is. For those who haven't, now is your chance to participate in the restoration and improvement of one of North America's outstanding caves, and to enjoy the hospitality of a wonderful off-the-beaten-track, small Mexican town.

For those not accustomed to traveling in Mexico there is a good primer at the TSA web site (<http://www.cavetexas.org>).

Fourth Annual Maverick Grotto TAG Trip 2003 by R.D. Milhollin NSS #29962

06/14 Saturday: After a week of cave diving in Florida, I drove north on I-75 to visit Michael Coulter and begin preparing for a week of TAG caving with Milo Marks and Diana Tomchick. We were set to meet in Scottsboro, Alabama, right in the middle of an extensive caving region. As I was driving, I spoke to Mel Eady who was traveling to meet a group of cavers going to check out a cave named Wayne's Pit and some other cave near Russell Cave. We made some quick arrangements over the phone, as I hurried to Scottsboro to raise Milo and Diana who I could not reach by cell phone. These two had spent the night in the first motel they found, which was about 30 feet from a set of actively traveled railroad tracks. We jumped in the trucks, and took off for Jackson, which was near the caves we were looking for. From there we turned off onto county road 75, then turned right on county road 104 and found the cavers' cars at the base of a mountain. We followed the fresh pink flagging tape up the steep slope and across a series of valleys until it ended, and then wandered over the mountain for two and a half hours looking for where the pit was that Mel and her friends were dropping. We never found it. We later found out that they had run out of flagging tape about 100 yards from the pit. We wandered down off the mountain soaked in sweat, then went to South Pittsburg for lunch and hiked up to their hometown pit. Diana and I made it there first, Milo lagged behind, and then made a bad turn and never located the pit. As we were rigging, a hard rain began to fall, but Diana and I made the 160-foot drop, having to pass a knot joining a 150-foot and a 75-foot rope together. We took a few photos, and then hiked down the trail to the preferred parking lot, and drove back to Scottsboro. There we changed accommodations to the Budget Host motel in Stevenson, which was closer to

caves and farther from the railroad tracks.

06/15 Sunday: Milo was not feeling well from our romp on the



Diana Tomchick, rappelling down South Pittsburgh Pit.

mountain looking for caves on Saturday morning. We had breakfast, and then Milo decided he would be better off resting than caving, and that if he felt better he would go see what there was to see at Russell Cave National Monument. Diana and I drove up to South Pittsburg and across a "shortcut" to Trenton where Michael was waiting. We finally met up, and drove south down to the Sequoyah Caverns exit and then to the gate leading to Moses' Tomb. We drove across the farmer's fields and then a large pasture, and parked at the road's end and began a short hike up to the cave entrance. At the trail's end, a small hole indicated the entrance to what was promised as a significant pit. We rigged off of two very close trees, and let the rope slide over a smooth log that someone had laid across the entrance. The drop was spectacular. About 25 feet down the rappeller fits through a smallish slot next to a large formation, then the cave bells out like a scuba tank and is 225 feet deep.

We each slid down in turn, and I set up a camera on the bottom to record Michael's climb out as Diana illuminated the cave walls. When all gear was packed and brought back down to the trucks, Michael led us into Trenton and to Randy's, a great



Michael Coulter in Howard's Waterfall Cave.

restaurant located directly over the next cave on the agenda: Howard's Waterfall. I had been here once before, and had taken some photos of the upstream passage. But this time Michael led us to a downstream section that was very different from what I

expected. Large conduit passage led to a 20 - 25 foot drop, which we proceeded to try to find a way around. Michael tried a climb-down in a muddy area and then could not climb back up the slippery slope. We had already used the only available webbing to get down to where we were, so Diana climbed back up, threw the webbing down, and then we constructed an etrier for Michael, who proceeded up easily. We then threw the webbing back up to Diana who re-rigged so we all could get back up to the main level. Before heading out we shot a few more photos.

06/16 Monday: Milo decided that since he had not returned to feeling normal he should seriously consider getting back to Texas. Diana argued that the symptoms he had were indicative of dehydration, and that he needed to drink large quantities of dilute electrolyte to lessen the negative effects. Diana volunteered several times to drive Milo to a clinic or hospital, or to drive him back to Texas, but instead Milo decided to attend to some business in Gadsden Alabama and decide at that point whether to return to cave some more or to head back to Texas. Recognizing that if he was not in top form he would not be at his best dropping and climbing up serious pits in TAG, and that he certainly would not be enjoying it too much, we agreed that he should make the



Diana prepares to drop the main pit of Cagle's Chasm.

call as to how to proceed. Milo ended up leaving Alabama and TAG without ever SEEING a cave. Diana and I navigated through the town of South Pittsburg and drove over to see the landowner whose property is in front of the land containing Cagle's Chasm. The map promised a multi-pit, multi-level caver's playground. Cagle's did not fail to dazzle. We first tied the two ropes we had together, and I figured we should be close but that the ropes should reach to the bottom 186 feet below. I rappelled in, passed the knot a hundred feet down, and realized several tens of feet later that the terminal knot was swinging about 20 feet over the floor. I had no choice but to return to the surface and reconsider the rigging. In the meantime, Michael was wandering about looking for the path to the pits, and Diana finally hiked out to find him. By the time they returned to the mouth of the pit, I was at the surface. Diana headed down to Michael's truck to retrieve his 300-foot rope, and after a quick re-rig we were down into the impressive pit. We then wandered around through some passages below the pit. A large room with a high dome and a waterfall coming through the ceiling were extra nice. There are connecting passages between the three pits in the site. This would be a great place for first day warm up exercises on a future grotto trip.

06/17 Tuesday: Michael had listed Valhalla as one of the places he had not yet visited that he wanted to see. The cave is located

on forest company land far off the beaten path, and you have to pass through a few hoops to get access. Buddy Lane is the listed contact, so Michael contacted him via e-mail a couple of days in advance, before we really knew which day would suit us best. When Tuesday rolled around, he called and left all the directions needed and then sent the permission forms attached to an e-mail message. We met at Fackler, Alabama, and proceeded a short distance to where the forest roads begin. The roads are rough and consist of a clay-mud substrate covered with a thin veneer of gravel or crushed stone. We noticed places along the way where the rock surface was washed away, but paid no great attention to it. We arrived at the end of the road, exchanged greetings with the heavy equipment operators there, and then dressed and headed up the short trail to the cave entrance. "Impressive" does not do this pit justice. It is very picturesque, with a low side and a soaring rock wall opposite and uphill. I rigged first to a large chestnut tree at the top of the entrance slope, then safetyed-in and walked down to another chestnut that grew right at the edge and installed a primary anchor.

The rope ride down was spectacular. At the bottom we inspected the periphery of the chamber and found a waterfall with water flowing down into the wall and a small dome room located off a downhill passage, but Michael had studied the map



The muddy parking area at Valhalla, before the deluge.

and directed us to the top of the debris cone opposite the entrance area. At the top of the heap was a small passage leading in through a breakdown room and then into several passages. We tried each of these in turn. First Michael explored a crawlway and concluded it did not go in any way we were willing to pursue. I found a way down into the small room below the breakdown room we had seen from a window in the floor, but it did not seem to go anywhere. Diana scored by following a passage up and her crawlway broke into a junction room with passages leading off in three directions. Again we each took a lead, Diana's played out first, and she joined me in an interesting crawl that passed through a body-sized "cat crawl" before ending on a small balcony overlooking a waterfall room. We both left to see what Michael had found. His passage was by far the more complex of the three that led from the junction. His also had some flagging that showed someone had taken some interest in this area of the cave. In a short time we had located him and he led us in and down into a complex stream passage room in a fault-controlled area. As we were climbing down the muddy shelves, we noticed that the thunder from outside could be heard down where we were, deep in the ground. Almost at the same time the tiny stream passage began to grow and the small waterfall suddenly began pouring about three times the previous flow over a small set of falls. A new waterfall began out of the ceiling above us. This was apparently our signal to leave. On the way back we noticed a tiny black salamander, a white and apparently eyeless millipede,

and a large tiger salamander.

It took about twenty minutes to make it back to the pit, where the skies were dark with clouds, and water was pouring down the sides from 235 feet above. Michael climbed first, shooting a strobe flash as he climbed. The rain abated some as Diana prepared to climb, but the runoff was beginning to really flood into the void, and a small cascade just next to the rope became a full-fledged waterfall, carrying hundreds of gallons per minute over the edge. Each climber took several minutes after the climb to reposition a rope pad at the chert-studded edge. Buddy had alerted us of several close calls involving frayed rope at this spot, so we were aware and concerned that the fire hose rope pad



R.D. Milhollin, displaying the jeans used to pad the tree at Valhalla: "Who needs a wonder diet when you can lose so much weight caving?"

should remain in place once each climber passed. In spite of the wetness, the climb up was dramatic. Once at the top the rain had subsided to barely a sprinkle, and we were able to get derigged and packed for the trip back to the vehicles in a short time. Mac the cave dog was nowhere to be seen. We all assumed he was bored with us, and had wandered back to the trucks. We hiked down the short trail to the old logging road we had walked in on, but it was not there. In its place was a twenty-foot wide raging stream, and Mac was on the other side visibly concerned that something was wrong. Michael tried to cross, but about one-third of the way across he was nearly swept away by the force of the water. We carefully hiked downstream to where the old road had branched from the road currently in use, where we remembered there was a wide spot. We were right, the water was shallower and we were able to cross with only slight trepidation. On the other side, the clearing we had parked in was a massive mud-hole. We each took turns getting out of muddy cave clothes and crawling into clean, dry truck seats. Michael went out to scout the roadway, and returned shortly to report things were completely impassable, and would likely remain so until the morning. The cell phones did not reach out of the area we were in, so Michael's wife Joni could not get the message that we were OK but stranded. There was plenty of snacks, trail mix, granola bars, tuna, water, and a few beers. All was not lost.

06/18 Wednesday. In the morning Michael again went hiking and this time returned with the news that the water had indeed subsided, but the road was very muddy, and the gravel cover had washed out in some places. This didn't bother me so much since I was driving the full size Chevy 4x4, but I wondered about Michael's small truck. This concern was unfounded, as I had forgot to factor in that he had been a driver's education instructor for several years. Muddy roads were nothing to him once he got some traction going. If he stopped, that could be trouble. This was again a waste of concern, we made it off the mountain and headed for breakfast, and Michael high-tailed it back to his home

to assure his family that he was OK and that there was really nothing he could have done to get that news to them while we were stuck in the woods. We stopped at a great diner in Scottsboro, the Liberty Restaurant, where our waitress noticed my Maverick Grotto t-shirt. She brought us the Caver's Log, a notebook left at the restaurant by Marion Smith for people to record their exploits, and it was chock-full of comments by cavers from all over the country, which made for entertaining reading during a really fine meal.

My Chevy truck had shown signs of thermal problems on the way driving up from Florida. Michael and I had changed the water pump at his house when I arrived there, but there was still water leaking. During downtime at Scottsboro I had visited a local mechanic (also a caver) who had recommended and discovered that a plastic reservoir on the side of the radiator had been cracked, probably due to overheating earlier in the trip. I ordered the part to be shipped in and made arrangements to take the truck back the following day to have this part replaced. While in Scottsboro, Diana and I visited the Airline Unclaimed Baggage store, the place your lost luggage goes if you don't reclaim it. This place is like a huge thrift store. While there I found a great name-brand backpack, some caving shirts, and an Audiovox two-way radio to replace the one I lost down a pit near Camino de



Mac the Cave Dog

los Pinos two years earlier. Diana also found a radio, so now we were set for communication from the surface to the bottom of the pits. That afternoon Mel Eady contacted us and invited us to meet her that evening at Cedar Ridge Crystal Cave near Kimball, Tennessee, about twenty minutes north of us. We met her about dusk on the side of an interstate highway. The cave entrance was behind a gate built into a stone wall that was disguised as part of the road cut. Cedar Ridge was without an entrance until breached by road construction, so it is relatively untouched by vandals. Being horizontal and highly decorated throughout it is also not a typical TAG cave. As we entered, the passage was small and we had to crawl through a rock orifice where a gate had been installed previously. From that point, about twenty-five feet in, the room began to open up, until about seventy-five feet in we were standing in a beautiful chamber the size of a small theater, surrounded on three sides by a forest of columns. Mel directed us into the most decorated area, where the twenty-foot tall columns were covered by delicate helictites. The path led over a short drop-off down to a flowstone-covered crawlway. I was looking for a place to set up for some photos, and Diana was coming right behind me. She suddenly made an unexpected noise, and I turned around to see her sit down very hard on the floor. In making the step-down she missed the last two feet of drop, and that was enough that her ankle area was severely hurt.

Diana was of course upset, but she said that twisted ankles were not a new thing for her, although she had never broken a bone. Mel and I assured her that if she had broken a bone she would know it, and we all decided that it must be a bad sprain. We asked Diana what she wanted to do, and she decided that if at all possible she was going to make it out of the cave with minimum assistance.

And that is what she did. It took about thirty minutes but she walked, crawled, and otherwise exited the cave. When we exited it was near midnight, and Mel had work obligations in the morning, Eastern Time. Diana and I had no pressing obligations, Central Time, so after thanks to Mel, and assurances from Diana that all would be well, and of course a celebratory malt beverage for each adventurer, we departed for our respective states.

06/19 Thursday: The morning brought no relief for Diana. She knew that she would not be caving any time soon, and since Milo had left, she began to check around for rental cars she could rent for the one-way drive back to Dallas. After several tries, a good deal was found at the Chattanooga airport. We packed everything up, drove to the airport, and then said goodbye. Back in Dallas, x-rays indicated she had suffered a fracture. I headed back south to meet Michael and his boys for a day of caving at the Fox Mountain Preserve in Georgia. Aaron and Brendan are both enthusiastic about caving, but need more exposure time, which means the Dalton High School football team will have to stop going to state championships every year, thus freeing band director Michael to take his kids caving more. We did not arrive at the base of the mountain until about 6:30 PM, and by the time we had hiked up, rigged the drop, gotten everyone safely to the bottom, traversed the main route to Earl's Ledge, and dropped that short pitch, and then reversed all operations, it was 5:30 AM. Michael then had to drive about three hours to see the program his daughter Anastasia was in at the end of drum major camp in Athens, Georgia; he had to pull a full day with no sleep at all. I crashed at the closest motel I could find, and just after noon drove down into Georgia to check out a town settled by Milhollins before the Civil War that had been erased from modern maps by General Sherman. Later in the afternoon I met the Coulters gathered together back in Dalton for dinner. Michael actually looked OK considering the night and day he had just been through. After a scrumptious meal, I bid farewell and headed north up Interstate 75.

Newsletter Exchange Review by R.D. Milhollin, NSS 29962

NSS News July 2003 (Vol. 61 No. 07)

As the 2003 NSS Convention looms, the lead stories in the *News* are not about marble or sea caves, but instead caves in Virginia and in Cuba. This issue begins with a column from new NSS President Scott Fee, who begins with a very brief bio, moves onto a request for volunteer help, specifically in hosting a convention, and of course financial help as well. He also addresses the very contentious issue of the NSS Library and the new NCKRI (National Caves and Karst Research Institute) in Carlsbad New Mexico and offers some options, and finally asks for input from members on what THEY would like to see accomplished within the society.

Tommy Shifflett leads off the featured articles with a history of the exploration of Burns Chestnut Ridge Cave in Virginia. The cave is twisty, crawly, and consists of 14 miles of passage and a depth from the highest entrance of 722 feet! The mapping was done utilizing 28 muddy underground camps, all at 49-degree F. The system was discovered back in the 1950's, and an early description mentioned 30-foot drops and a major blockage about 200 feet in. Duke University students began exploration in the 1960's. Late NSS president Fred Wefer was involved in some of these early attempts, and he was responsible for a dye trace

chemical persuasion was being used to open passages, but the unfriendly characteristics of the passages discouraged first-timers from returning, and the project fizzled out as cavers found more promising and enjoyable places to poke around. By 1980 a new generation of cavers, led by Gregg Clemmer and including the author, began exploration there. A major breakthrough at a place named the "bone crusher" makes reading that is definitely not for the claustrophobic. Horrible conditions and breakthroughs at other area caves made exploration at Burns sporadic throughout the 1980's but some headway was made. Finally a digging effort yielded borehole in 1993. Large passage led to more crawlways, but lots of work with hammers and several deformed chisels later the team was able to pass through. 1995 was a bounty year, with the discovery of "Dead Cousin Pit", and the origin of the name is explained in the article. That year the survey passed the 700-foot deep mark. By 1996 the team had added camping to the tools used to survey and explore in Burns, but according to the article the last trip in was in 1998, and air is still blowing! This article features nice photos and good stick maps. Compare the first map with the second to get an idea of the size of this cave. Additional photos are on the back cover.

Next, Barbara am Ende contributes an article describing "Cuba Expedition 2001," which features photos by co-expeditioner Dave Bunnell. The first couple of days were spent at the town of Sancti Spiritus (Holy Spirit) 4 hours southeast of Havana, and then the entourage moved into the hills of Boquerones, and surveyed several caves for the few days they were there. The next area the team converged on was the Sierra Escambray. La Guira was one of the main caves in that area that they explored. It is the resurgence for Caja de Agua Cave farther up the mountain. The passage there ends in a sump about 4 kilometers in, and the crew decided it would be too much hassle to make a sump dive. In order to explore some upper level passages in La Guira, the Cubans carried in sections of pipe that they bolted together to form a scaling pole. The trip took the crew back to Sancti Spiritus and the Cubans had a party, of course! The next day was spent at Matanzas, where they toured a large commercial cave known as Cueva de Santa Catalina. Their hosts, Ivonne Vasquez and Abel Cruz, run ecotourism trips through the area. While they were in town they attended the first annual meeting of the Speleological Society of Matanzas, complete with scientific presentations and side trips to local caves, including Cueva Belamar, where the party observed fantastic formations, and the next day they saw more at Cueva del Jarrito. This article has fantastic photos, as one would expect with Dave Bunnell along.

Julie Schenck and Chuck Porter carry the story forward with their article *Return to Cuba: 2002 Expedition*. Most of the people on this trip were on the previous one. The Cuban Speleological Society and the Cuban Foundation for Nature and Man sponsored the expedition and arranged all government permits. The first part of the trip was a continuation of the mapping project at Boquerones Cave System in North Central Cuba where a karst river runs underground through a range of hills. The schedule was not demanding: the workday would end about 5:00 or 6:00 PM, then they would relax, bathe, and swim in the river for awhile, and have dinner about 8:00 PM, followed by rum and stories. However, the team was able to keep this pace for two weeks without a day off. The second week was to have been spent at Caja de Agua, but the going at Boquerones was more inviting, so they opted to stay. The third week, though, they relocated to Matanzas, where they visited and surveyed in some of the same caves as am Ende and Bunnell's group had done previously. The last few days were spent in old Havana, touring the restoration work on the colonial capital, visiting with other Cuban cavers, and making plans for future trips that might allow more Americans the opportunity to cave in Cuba. Photos of Cuba caving are on this issue's covers.

Next, Pat Kambesis contributes a piece explaining the composition and goals of an informal group within the NSS known as "Friends of the Library". In a nutshell, she and her organization are against the movement to loan all or part of the NSS Library, currently housed at NSS offices in Huntsville, Alabama, to any other non-NSS organization. Of course, the other organization in question is the National Cave and Karst Research Institute (NCKRI) taking shape in Carlsbad, New Mexico under the direction of Louise Hose. Most everything you could want to know about the FOL is contained on the organization's website: www.cavebooks.com/fol.

The obligatory NSS Convention page is next, and it urges potential attendees to register, gives emergency contact info, describes the food plan, briefly reminds the reader that there are cave trips, and gives an informational website. There will be a blood drive on-site in Porterville, and you might see a cave troll or participate in an NCRC Orientation to Cave Rescue Course while out there.

The development of the more powerful (particularly white) LED (light emitting diode) has caused a virtual revolution in caver light source availability. LEDs have been used in several different configurations for primary, helmet-mounted lights as well as hand-held backup lights. On the "Technology" page Michael Fraley discusses the Modu'DEL 8 kit for the Petzl Duo headlight. The insert, made by Petzl, offers a halogen lamp for distance beam lighting and 8 LEDs with three power settings. The "burn" characteristic of regulated LED lamps is that they maintain a constant level of brightness for a certain time, then rapidly dim to another, lower light level, and remain at that level for some considerable time afterward. The author describes these characteristics for each of the power settings, and discusses the costs associated with purchasing the Duo LED 8 light versus upgrading your existing Duo with the Modu'LED 8 kit. Fraley continues on with a discussion of pros and cons of the new light, optimal vs. maximal settings, and other aspects of this product a caving consumer might want to know before forking over a considerable amount of green.

In "Society News", a liaison committee is being formed to facilitate communication between the NSS and the NCKRI (remember, the President's Message and the Friends of the Library). If you would to get embroiled in this issue sign up at president@caves.org. If you are in the liaising mood but can't get excited by books, regional coordinators are needed for the Youth Group Liaison Committee. This group would be responsible for lining up cavers who are willing to present an "orientation to caving" or cave conservation class for youth groups. They would also identify cavers willing to lead groups of kids through caves, promote safe caving to youth groups, and generally provide information to the cavers who agree to take on these responsibilities. It is hoped that this program will reduce the number of poorly equipped and poorly prepared youth groups. This year the Nashville Grotto turns 50! A homecoming-style weekend is planned with camping, bonfire, dinners, speakers, and all that stuff. Oh yes, there will be caving trips as well. The NSS is also looking for a Safety and Techniques Committee Chair. The positions of Market Analysis Chair and Bookstore Marketing guru have not been filled as of press time.

There are two "Letters", one which expresses dismay at "wholesale booty-scooping" in Florida at Brooksville Ridge Cave (Charles Danforth), and one that attempts to set the record straight as to who said what in a recent obituary (Rob Robbins). In "Reading", there are two books reviewed. Gary K. Soule looks at *Mammoth Cave and the Kentucky Cave Region* by Bob and Judi Thompson. This is one of a series of books called "Images of America" that attempt to explore the history of neighborhoods, towns, and cities across the nation. The book features nearly 200 vintage black and white photographs of the region, none newer than 1941. About 15 different show cave operations are covered, including Diamond Caverns, Lost River Cave, Mammoth Cave, and Floyd Collins' Crystal Cave. Bob Thompson is a noted speleo-historian and recent recipient of the Peter M. Hauer Spelean History Award. Reviewer Soule recommends the book for cavers and anyone else. *Caving* by Chris Howe receives a mixed review from reviewer Bill Mixon. The binding and text don't seem to be chosen for the same age group, the original British text has been barely modified for an American audience, and the price is high. These objections are balanced by safety and conservation messages, as well as the color photos by the author, who Mixon holds generally in high regard (as a photographer).

The life of Marshall Goode Holmes, a well-known and well-respected West Virginia caver, is celebrated by George Dasher in the "Obituaries" section. The "Spelean Spotlight" is bright on Louise Hose, caving scientist and first permanent Director of the National Cave and Karst Research Institute (NCKRI, remember the President's Message, the FOL article, the NSS/NCKRI Liaison Committee?) in Carlsbad New Mexico. Dr. Hose has caved in California, Oman, the Purificación, Cheve, Cueva de Villa Luz, Papua New Guinea, Greece, and England. She has been very active on a number of NSS committees. Most of the interview with Bill Steele involves the establishment of the NCKRI.

This month "Jay's Journal" looked to the *Maverick Bull* for inspiration. Ed Goff's article on the exploration and survey of "Grieta de la Perdicion" in the Mexican STATE of Nuevo Leon (Jan. 2003) is reviewed. Other caves featured this month are Bowden Cave (WV), marble caves in California, and Carrol Cave in Missouri. On Rope 1 has a store open, and *Virginia Cellars* (VA Speleological Survey) editor Brad Blasé is patted on the back for a job well done. Kelly Mathis, an Idaho caver, relates in *Gem Caver* (Gem State Grotto) adventures on the way to and during Mexpeleo 2002. He rode down with Peter Sprouse and other Texas cavers. The *Carbide Flash* newsletter of the Paha Sapa Grotto contains several cool articles about little and big caves, including Montana's Lost Creek Siphon and New Mexico's Lechuguilla. The latter

is described as "more fun than a slap in the eye with a dirty rope".

American Caving Accidents 1999-2001 (NSS News June 2003 part 2)

There are several items in this compilation that are of interest to Maverick and Texas cavers. First are the descriptions of the deaths of Texas cavers Joe Ivy and Christy Quintana at 0-9 Well and Sotano del Aire respectively. Additionally, there is a condensation of the incident at Dead Man's Cave near Boerne Texas in which San Antonio caver Mike Cunningham was threatened with drowning. The information was drawn from an article written for the *Maverick Bull*. John Gookin contributes an article entitled "Lightning Safety for Cavers" which references an article describing a serious incident in an Oklahoma cave involving DFW area cavers.

COGnizance June 2003 (Central Oklahoma Grotto)

(This is the copy we did not receive in time to include in last month's review. It appears the mailing date has changed so I may be reviewing the COG newsletter two months after it comes out rather than the one month as in the past)

The COG has a very well organized trip policy. Caving trips to the southwest part of the state occur the first Saturday of each month, and trips to the northwest are scheduled for the third Saturday. COG has one confirmed new member and a possible new member in the wings. Chairman Roy Diehl announced that COG raised \$150.00 for the Great X Cave fund, and now they have to think up a name for the formation they "bought". A Boy Scout trip had to be cancelled due to a tornado they saw over the site they wanted go. The grotto is involved in a Carlsbad project hosted by Tom Bemis. Selman Bat Cave is getting bat-watcher tours organized, presumably under the direction of the University of Central Oklahoma (UCO). Duane Del Veccio is a tour guide. Several grotto members visited Jester Cave as guests of the southern landowner (multiple entrances) and had to deal with rain. This can be a major problem since this gypsum cave acts as a storm runoff conduit. A couple of the landowner family members were escorted through the cave by grotto members, who happily recounted history, stories true and questionable, and other lore surrounding Jester. Past the Bat Maze Room the smell and sounds indicated bats ahead, and sure enough lots of bats were soon flying around and past the team, impressing the

landowners who were not used to this. They even got to see a Townsend's Big-Eared Bat (*Corynorhinus townsendii*). Grotto members also took a brave group of Scouts to Lady's, Endless, and Root Caves. Shawn Thomas, a COG member, was relocating, so as a going-away present some of his fellow grotto members took him on a cave trip to Pearl Cave, "one of the prettier caves in Oklahoma." The entrance is called Sylvan Pit, and at the bottom is a pool. Some of the interesting points of this cave are an exfoliating gypsum ceiling, a router-like ceiling channel, well-behaved water routes, and old wall signatures. At the top of a climb Shawn was stunned by the size of the crystals they found there. An article from the *Wall Street Journal's* Leisure and Arts section was reprinted describing the damage to prehistoric paintings in Lascaux Cave caused by fungi.

Speleospace (Greater Houston Grotto)

No newsletter received for July

The Oztotl Caver (DFW Grotto) July/August 2003 (Vol. 22 No. 7/8)

The DFW Grotto is getting in the T-shirt mood just like the Mavericks, but apparently they have artwork! An article by Paul Aughey of Georgia was reports on the death of Bruce Brewer. He died in Climax Cave, located in south Georgia, leading a group of cavers on a "sumping" trip. The intention was to do a series of duck-unders or breath-hold dives from air-bell to air-bell to traverse the cave. Bruce went ahead, as planned, to check on the route and never returned to the group. There is some speculation as to how he died, but his body was recovered from the sump early the next day. A second article extracted from the *Tallahassee Democrat* described Bruce as a 33-year old photojournalism instructor at Florida A&M and free-lance photographer with an intense love of the cave environment. Editor Mike Pearson notes that there was no front cover this issue due to multiple equipment failures, but promises to get the newsletter back on track by publishing a full edition next month instead of the usual flyer.

* 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.

Caving Events Calendar, August 2003

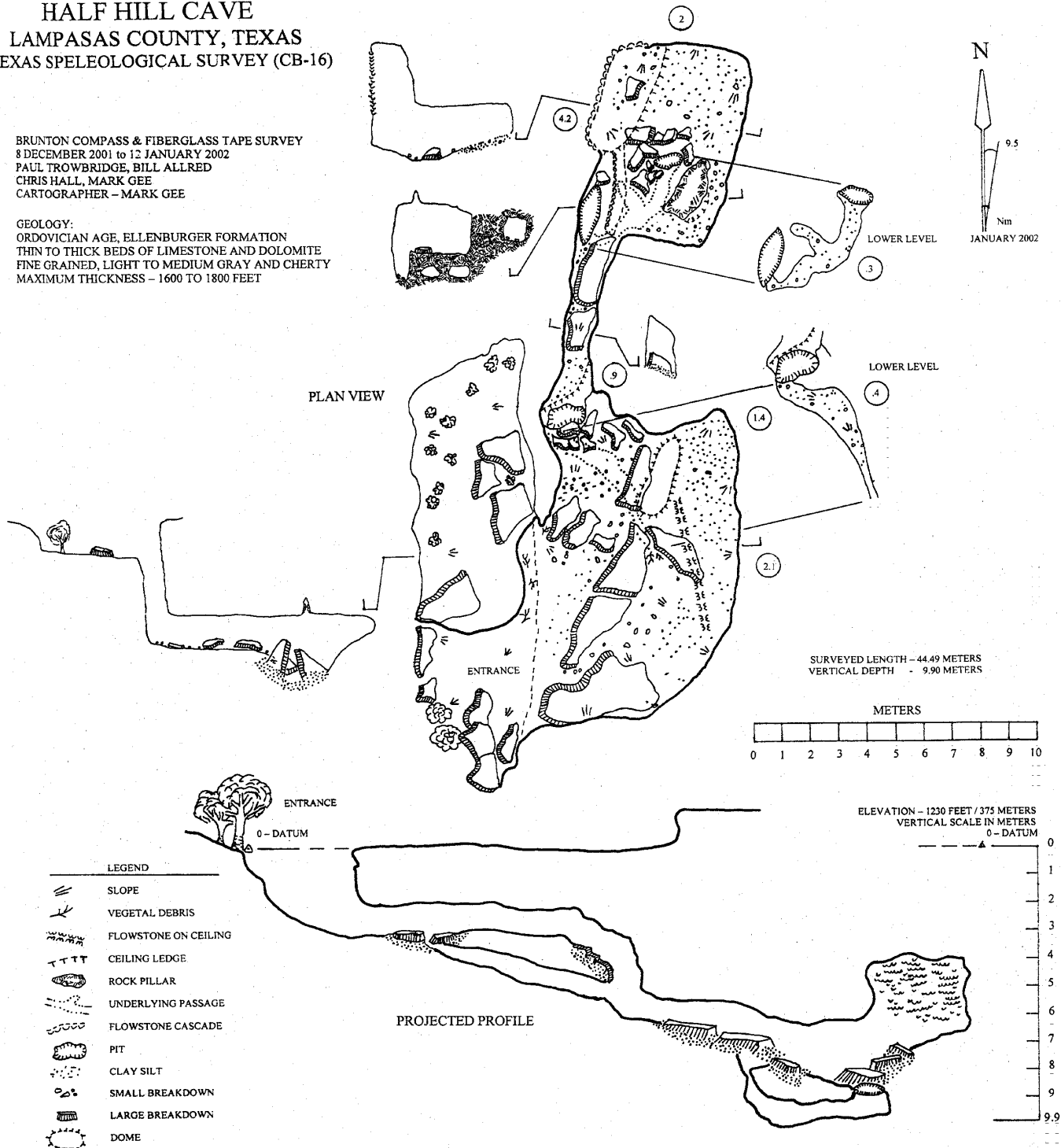
compiled by R.D. Milhollin

- Aug 09-10** **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
- Aug 16** **Hard Bargain Digging Project:** Will this dig lead to massive borehole? Be there to help and find out! **Contacts:** Mark Gee (972) 557-1503 or Keith Heuss Keith.Heuss@lcra.org
- Aug 27** **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
- Aug 30-31** **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 mllmiller@gvtc.com
- Aug 30-31** **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. **Contact:** Susan Herpin or Jennifer Foote highguads@yahoo.com
- Aug 30-Sep 01** **Bustamante 2003 TSA Labor Day Project:** (Mexico): Restoration trip to La Gruta de los Palmitos, Bustamante, Mexico. See article this issue. <http://www.cavetexas.org/bustainfo.html>
- Oct 17-19** **Texas Caver's Reunion:** location to be announced at a later date.
- 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

HALF HILL CAVE LAMPASAS COUNTY, TEXAS TEXAS SPELEOLOGICAL SURVEY (CB-16)

BRUNTON COMPASS & FIBERGLASS TAPE SURVEY
8 DECEMBER 2001 to 12 JANUARY 2002
PAUL TROWBRIDGE, BILL ALLRED
CHRIS HALL, MARK GEE
CARTOGRAPHER - MARK GEE

GEOLOGY:
ORDOVICIAN AGE, ELLENBURGER FORMATION
THIN TO THICK BEDS OF LIMESTONE AND DOLOMITE
FINE GRAINED, LIGHT TO MEDIUM GRAY AND CHERTY
MAXIMUM THICKNESS - 1600 TO 1800 FEET



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