CENTRAL
OKLAHOMA
GROTTO
OF THE NATIONAL
SPELEOLOGICAL SOCIETY,INC

C.O.G.nizance

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By Edward Charles Ellenbrook, Wichita Mountains Field Notes; Reprinted from *The Lawton Constitution.;* Saturday, April 26, 2008; page B1 3

November's Meeting is at Beleu's Bungalow

A short way off the Rock Creek Canyon Trail is a cave believed to have been inhabited for centuries by man.

Picture copied from Lawton Constitution, pg. B1; April 26, 2008

ANNOUNCEMENTS

*Northwest trips are scheduled the third Saturday of every month if the weather cooperates and there are folks to go! Contact Sue for details.

*The 7:30 November meeting will be at Steve Beleu's house.

MINUTES

CENTRAL OKLAHOMA GROTTO
Minutes of the October 10, 2008 meeting

Minutes of the October Halloween Meeting at the Wallaces!

Many thanks to Art and Paula Wallace.
Members Present: Duane Del Vecchio, John and Sue Bozeman, John Talbot, Art, Paula (spouse of member) and son Jamie Wallace (prospective member)

Let me tell you that since Steve was NOT at the October meeting, HE is hosting the November meeting!!!!!!!
We said HI and then we discussed all that was on the newsletter's old and new business list and everything was fine.

No trips. Too wet.

Future trips depend on the weather. Mrs. S. says it is too wet to play underground and we believe her! Why would she tell an untruth????

We had a Treasurer's Report from John Talbot and it sounded wonderful.

We'll try and have a meeting at Steve's before the next survey trip to Broken Horn. Any takers need to e-yodel now!

Peace to all,
And to all a good night!
Sue Bozeman

TREASURER'S REPORTS

INCOME	
DIVIDEND	$ 5.16
TOTALS	**$ 5.16**
CASH ON HAND	$ 184.70
CHECKING	$ 428.28
SAVINGS	$ 2,684.49

PREPARED BY TREASURER
JOHN TALBOT

TOTAL FUNDS AS OF 10/3/04 $ 3,297.47

TRIP REPORTS

No Trip Reports, Rain, Rain, Rain!

POTPOURRI

Hiking trail Leads to secluded canyon

By Edward Charles Ellenbrook,
Wichita Mountains Field Notes
Reprinted from *The Lawton Constitution.*
Saturday, April 26, 2008; page B1

Quartz Mountain is the crown jewel of the outcrop of mountains — with such names as King, Flat Top, Lugert, Hicks and Soldier Springs — that form the westernmost ter-mi-nus of the range of mountains known as the Wichita Mountains. Of these mountain is-lands, Quartz Mountain, clad in salmon pink-colored granite, offers one of the most beauti-ful settings and premier mountain locations any-where for hiking, climbing and bicycling activities. These mountains lap over into Jackson and Greer counties.

Historically, this is an enchanting chain of moun-tains that more than a century ago were the winter camp-grounds of the lordly Kiowa and fierce Comanche tribes that hunted and camped here. At the northern edge of Quartz Mountain a canyon, facing east, offered a protective vail for shelter and food for its inhabitants. Water was found nearby, before Lake Altus was built, as the North Fork of the Red River ran just to the east of the canyon.

This western mountain chain possesses some of the most pristine wilderness mountain environment any-where. Here, at Quartz Mountain Arts and Conference Cen-ter and Nature Park, west of the town of Lone Wolf, park officials have developed old and new hiking trails centered around the beautiful, new Quartz Mountain Resort Lodge. There are at least six hiking trails of various chal-lenges and lengths, with easy to difficult ratings, designated as "lodge trails": Sunrise Trail, Sunset Loop, Twin Peaks Trail, Eagle Trail, Mountain Pass Trail, Cave and Rock ' Creek Canyon Trails.

One hiking quest down into a secluded, pic-turesque canyon is Cave and Rock Creek Canyon Trail. This is a well-trodden trail along the north side of Quartz Mountain and is classified as an easy-to-moderate hiking trail.

The trailhead begins at the north edge of the Great Plains Amphitheater northwest of the lodge. This is a short, but beautiful hike that takes about 30 minutes each way or an approximately one-hour round trip.

Rock Creek Canyon trail offers a hiking experience where the trail follows along the base of Quartz Mountain under canopies of oak, hackberry and western soapberry trees. Tree-covered slopes lead to the grassy meadows of a cove where the backwaters of Lake Altus form beneath the high granite slopes of the canyon.

As we began the hike the dainty pinkish blossoms of spring beauty (Claytonia virginica), one of the first wild-flowers to bloom and signal the advent of spring, greeted us upon nearing the trail head. Suddenly, out of nowhere, we heard for the first time this year (mid-March) the lovely qua-vering trill of the canyon wren and witnessed the return of the high-soaring turkey vulture sailing along the open skies above the canyon.

A few yards down the trail a sign points out the trails. A very short way down the trail, take the side trail (Cave Trail), which leads to an ancient cave believed to have been inhabit-ed for centuries by man. Upon examining the cave, take time to study the extraordinary varicolored lichens of yellowish-green, gray, white and rust encrusted on upper and lower boulders.

From here the trail snakes through a forest of native trees and shrubs where buds are swelling and tender young leaflets are emerg-ing on branches as nature decorates the for-est and mountains. The air here has a special quality as mountain air infuses and caresses the hiker as he plods along the trail. On our journey we came upon the scallop fungus growing on an oak log, giving the appearance of a white fan.

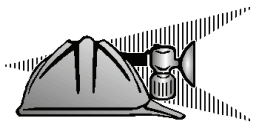
At the end of the trail there is a sign stating "Private Property" and the public trail and hike ends here. Before reaching the sign there is a beautiful grass meadow, off trail, leading to the waters of Lake Altus. Here the waters of the inlet offer water birds refuge and a place for feeding. While we were searching the inlet for a glimpse of a great blue heron, suddenly one flew up, circling around with wings flapping and his legs straight out behind him as he swung around to land on the other side.

Springtime is a good time to visit or stay a couple of days at Quartz Mountain and enjoy the quiet beauty of this part of the Wichita Mountains archipelago. After a long hike, en-joy the fine cuisine at the rustic Sundance Cafe' Restau-rant at the lodge, which offers scenic views of Lake Altus, Twin Peaks and the distant pinnacles of the mountains on the far horizon.

To reach Quartz Mountain from Lawton, take U.S. 62 west to downtown Altus. Turn north on U.S. 283 and fol-low it until you reach a sign where you turn onto Oklahoma 44. Con-tinue until you the sign directing you to the Quartz Mountain Arts and Conference Center and Nature Park area; from there follow the winding road to the lodge and hiking trails. For additional hikes to interesting and historic places, pick up a copy of the columnist's book, "Outdoor and Trail Guide to the Wichita Mountains" at book stores, museums and visi-tor centers, or online at

www.wichitam.oun-tainsguide.com.eebrook@sbcglobal.net

Central Oklahoma Grotto is a non-profit organization and a chapter of the NSS (National Speleological Society), Cave Avenue, Huntsville, AL., 35810. Dedicated to cave conservation and safety, C.O.G. published general information in a monthly newsletter ($6.00/year) and detailed cave surveys and related Speleological items in a yearly publication, *The Oklahoma Underground* ($3-$8/issue) Membership is by sponsor and is $12 per year for adults, $6 for spouses and students, and $3 if under 18. Central Oklahoma Grotto meets once a month on the second Friday of each month. For information, write 3208 Gettysburg Dr., Altus, Oklahoma, 73521. All submissions to the newsletter should be sent to the editor: Lil or Dale Town, 3208 Gettysburg Dr., Altus, OK 73521: Telephone: (580)477-4027: E-mail: oklmt@cableone.net. The deadline for submissions for any particular month's issue is the 20th day of the previous month. If you wish material returned. Please include a SASE with submission. All materials in this newsletter is available for reproduction, provided proper credit is given with the article when you print it. Trade publications are welcomed. *Cave softly and safely!*



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