CENTRAL
OKLAHOMA
GROTTO
OF THE NATIONAL
SPELEOLOGICAL SOCIETY,INC

C.O.G.nizance

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The January meeting of the Central Oklahoma Grotto will be held at the home of John Talbot at 8:00 p.m. on Friday, January 9, 2008.

Remember that the January meeting is at John Talbot's. Happy New Year!

Dale Amlee shining a light through a piece of selenite during a surveying trip in Broken Horn Cave last March.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

*Northwest trips are scheduled the third Saturday of every month. Contract Sue or John Bozeman for details.

*The 7:30 January meeting will be at the home of John Talbot.

MINUTES

REMEMBER, we had a great Christmas Party in December at the Bozeman's. You have to look at the November minutes again!

CENTRAL OKLAHOMA GROTTO

Minutes of the meeting of November 14, 2008

Host: the hut-and-lean-to of Steve Beleu
Attendees: Dale Amlee, Anne Ault, John and Sue Bozeman, Duane Del Vecchio, John Talbot, Lil and Dale Town, John Van Dyke, Jon and Kelley Woltz

The Honorable Jon Woltz began the meeting at 8:13.

OLD BUSINESS

None

NEW BUSINESS

Duane talked about the 2009 bat count; it's set for February 21.

Duane talked about the trip to Carlsbad Caverns; we decided to offer either May 30 or June 6 to the NPS staff as our visitation dates; we will request to work again in "The Music Room". About half of our troop would work there, the other half would work elsewhere in the cave.

"New" officers for 2009--

Chairman – Jon Woltz
Vice-Chairman – Dale Amlee
Treasurer – John Talbot
Reporting secretary – Sue Bozeman
Secretary – S. Beleu

Meeting locations for 2009 –

January – John Talbot
February – John Van Dyke
March – Anne Ault
April – The Towns
May – Dale Amlee
June – Duane Del Vecchio
September – The Woltz'
October – Art Wallace
November – S. Beleu
December – The Bozemans

TREASURER'S REPORT

John Talbot gave his report.

We concluded the meeting at 8:50.

TREASURER'S REPORTS

INCOME		EXPENSES	
DIVIDEND	$ 0.09	Printing Newsletter	$8.70
DUES	12.00		
CARBIDE SALES	4.00		
TOTALS	**$ 16.09**		**$8.70**

PREPARED BY TREASURER
JOHN TALBOT

CASH ON HAND	$ 180.00
CHECKING	$ 440.46
SAVINGS	$ 2,684.49
TOTAL FUNDS AS OF 12/5/2008	**$ 3,304.95**

Note from Editor: The November Minutes had a typo, total funds was $3,297.56 ***Not*** *$33,297.56*

TRIP REPORT

Trip Report: Broken Horn Cave
Date: 15 November 2008
Personnel: Sue Bozeman, Steve Beleu, Dale Amlee, Jon Woltz.
Report by Dale Amlee

This survey trip to Broken Horn began on a cool fall day. The November wind was blowing, but the weekend temperatures were not yet into the seriously cold winter stages just yet. Still, as the group assembled at the ranch and began their preparations for the cave survey, there was a lot of polypropylene in evidence.

Steve began the trip with a bit of a wardrobe malfunction. His high-tech cave coveralls must have shrunk over the previous few months, as they just refused to close properly around him. In the efforts to squeeze into them, the zipper failed in the front. Luckily he was able to improvise an emergency closure method (studded leather belt) that would serve to hold the suit closed during the cave trip.

Every time I enter a cave I am a bit nervous of finding some sort of cave critter near the entrance. Snakes are especially on my mind, particularly in an entrance like this one where the first twenty feet are tight crawly spaces where your face is never more than a foot or two away from various rock shelves and cubby holes that could host some non-human resident.

This time, my fear was (slightly) justified. A s I wriggled along in the entrance space, I glanced up to my right and spotted a small, thin snake roughly two feet in length. He was up on the rock a bit, hanging down from his tail, giving me the eye and flicking his tongue at me. My mind rapidly tried to recall all of my boyscout training sessions in identification of poisonous snakes. Even though this one did not appear at first glance to be a poisonous variety, my fear told me that it may just not yet be old enough to sport the full blown visual features of a venomous snake. As I sat there trying to identify him, he began making little lunges towards me in the air. Thankfully I was out of range of him. Jon Woltz came in after me and was able to properly identify the snake. It turned out to be nothing more than a small baby King Snake. Still, it was somewhat exciting to me, as this was my first ever actual snake sighting in several years of caving.

The arm of the cave that we were working on was far to the back of the cave, and we knew that it would be nearly an hour of walking just to get to where we would start our work. The beginning portion of this cave is always warmer due to the direction of the wind that tends to blow through the cave, but as we proceed deeper into the cave it gradually becomes cooler. Sue took an air temperature reading towards the beginning of the cave and it read 58 degrees Fahrenheit.

During the trip to the back of the cave we encountered a few clusters of bats, but being this late in the year they were not easily riled up. While they often chittered their annoyance at us for disturbing them, very few took flight.

We picked up our survey where we had left off last time. The arm of the cave begins to get fairly jumbled up, I suspected due to the proximity of more than one entrance in the vicinity. There were a lot of parallel passages split apart by breakdown boulders, and the passage tended to wind back and forth on itself frequently. It led to a fairly difficult mapping session, as we were continually trying to make difficult compass shots at odd or extreme angles. There were not going to be any long shots on this trip, in fact the longest compass shot we got the entire day was only 35 feet.

One area we passed through had a small dome room above it, in fact the easiest way to get through the area was to climb up into the dome room, walk across some moderately precarious mud banks and drop back down into the main passage on the other side. The alternative to this was a belly crawl under the breakdown boulders through a stream passage carrying about five inches of water.

Steve spotted a small rock formation up in the dome room that, when visualized from one direction, looked almost like a butterfly shape. Nothing nearly so spectacular as the one (previously) in the Caverns of Sonora, but still it was enough to grab our attention for a few minutes and deserved at least one photo.

The back of the cave where we were doing our surveying felt quite a bit cooler than the entrance, but Sue's thermometer registered 56 degrees, only two degrees colder than the reading she had taken earlier. Obviously her thermometer is broken. It sure felt cold back there.

Based on earlier overland expeditions I had high hopes that we would be able to find an entrance on this survey trip, but the best we could do over five hours of caving was to get closer to an area where the passage splits apart in three different directions. It is very likely that one of these will yield a human-passable exit, but the discovery of that will have to wait for another day. We exited the cave in darkness, and with the evening temperatures falling rapidly we quickly departed the area in search of hot pizza.

Editor: Page 1A and 2A of The Tuesday, December 23, 2008 Oklahoman, had an article that several factors fuel census numbers . Also, how new populations trends may alter political map. Even though this is not cave related, one of our members was quoted in these to sections of the article. We are proud of you Steve Beleu!

Average growth rate in state outpaces U.S.

By VALLERY BROWN, STAFF WRITER

[PAGE 2A] U.S. Census Bureau estimates rank Oklahoma in the 20 fastest-growing states. The numbers reflect a growth rate of 9.4 people per 1,000, which is slightly higher than the national average of 9.1. The numbers take into consideration births, deaths and international/domestic mi-gration. "This is steady, expected growth," said **Steve Beleu** of the state Depart-ment of Libraries.

MORE BIRTHS THAN DEATHS, MIGRATION HELP STATE GROW

By VALLERY BROWN, STAFF WRITER

Numbers released Monday by the U.S. Census Bureau rank Oklahoma as one of the fastest-growing states.

Oklahoma is in the top 20 for percentage of population growth between July 2007 and July 2008 — an increase of 34,238.

According to the report, people moving into Okla-homa from other states and countries and natural increases in population account for the changes.

Steve Beleu, regional depository librarian for the Oklahoma Department of Libraries who specializes in demographic data, said he is not surprised by the increase.

"This is steady, expected growth," **Beleu** said. "We've not lost many major employers over that time and we haven't gained many either."

Oklahoma woman sets up bat haven

Wednesday, December 31, 2008
By Gazette staff

Beverly Wallace is known around her rural neighborhood as the "Bat Whisperer." At her home between Sapulpa and Glenpool, Wallace dedicates her time to feeding, rehabilitating and generally caring for her nocturnal mammal friends, according to a recent article in the World.

Her home even acts as the staging ground for a nonprofit sanctuary, licensed by the Oklahoma Department of Wildlife, called Bat's Landing — is it just us, or did anyone else just flash to a vision of melodramatic bats in '80s power suits with shoulder pads?

Wallace reportedly discovered her bat calling about seven years ago when she and her neighbor started suffering from a mosquito problem and — mosquito whisperer, you better flip to something else, it's about to get graphic — she got the "crazy notion" that bats could eradicate the bug problem.

From that first encounter, Wallace's bat love only grew.

. She traveled to Mineral Wells, Texas, for a "bat boot camp" at Bat World (yes, Bat World) and, besides raising the winged creatures, she also takes bat pick-up calls from around the Tulsa area from people who have bats in their homes, have found injured bats, or bats who have locked their keys in their bat cave.

"It's been a blessing to me to raise them and watch them grow, then able to release them. I've had quite good success at releasing a large number of pups, or baby bats," she told the World. "I've devoted my life to this."

Currently, Wallace is reportedly fostering several species, including a Hoary bat, the most widespread in the U.S., brown bats, red bats and something called an evening bat. In the summer, according to the article, she can care for as many as 60 pups,

But, that's not all. Wallace has been wild about animals since childhood, nursing animals such as armadillos, squirrels, birds and raccoons back to health. She and her husband once had 13 raccoons. Which, when we stop to think about it, is pretty batty.

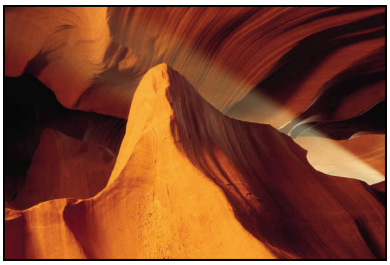
Disappearing Cave, Appearing Cave

Written by Steve Beleu

January 5, 2009

1
The cave just across the valley
We easily see, its jagged entrance
Promising cool darkness in this heat
That makes the leaves of the trees
Curl up to resemble straws.
But it would take days to hike there
Down the canyon, across its floor,
And up the steep slopes—and not days
But weeks of hard climbing
And dangerous at this altitude
Of 15,000 feet with nearby peaks
An extra 12,000 higher.
So we ignore it. But at night
It invades our dreams unwanted
And we awake from disturbed sleep
Anxious, looking all around us.
It forced itself into our dreams—
We blink our eyes—the cave's image
Appears and reappears.
One of our crew has left, footsteps
Heading toward that far distant cave.
But we're too fatigued to search
And abandon him to his fate.

2
Entering the holy cave to meditate
The monk sat in the humid darkness.
One day friends went to see him,
Ask him for help in penetrating the veil
That surrounds and sorrows life,
But found only his food bowl.
He had gone, enlightened,
And no longer needs his body
Which blocks and contorts
The eternal, selfless soul.
They sat where he sat and hoped
But understanding nothing about
The black sunlight of the deep caves
That are dark as the moonless night
Became bored, stood up, and left,
Unfit for The Cave of Life Beyond Life.



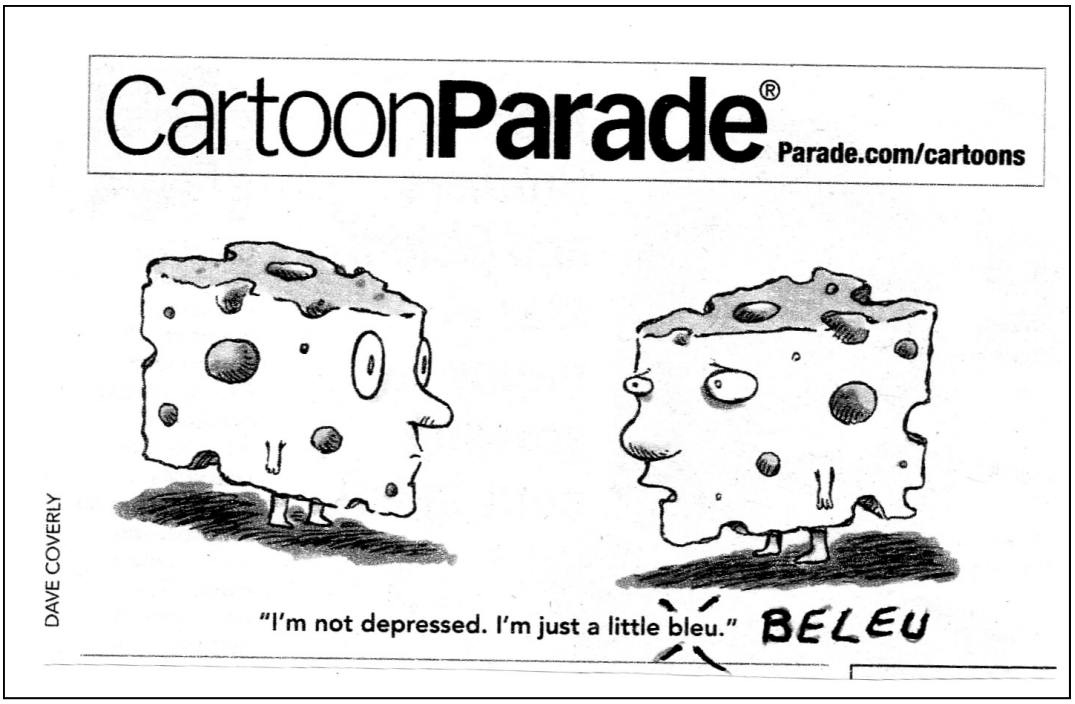
3
They open, they close; appear and vanish
Like enlightenment opens and closes
And too easily can vanish forever
During the deadening days of minutes
That are not the minutes of life
But minutes that are lifeless
Soul-numbing rot and its habits.

When The Cave of the Heart opens next
Be ready and leap into it without fear
Rapidly as the sun reflects gold
Then that reflection is gone.

4
Caves of the heart and soul,
We've come to explore your depths,
We'll leave our families and lovers.

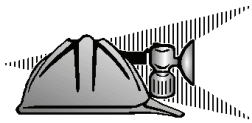
Here between these cool stone walls
We find unexplored passages
That lead us down and within.
Caves of the soul and heart,
We've come to live in your sunless art.

Mr. Beleu, this is for you! Courtesy from one of your fellow cavers!



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 ($12.00/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!*

Start the new year out right, come to the January Grotto meeting at John Talbot's, Friday, January 9.



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