CENTRAL
OKLAHOMA
GROTTO
OF THE NATIONAL
SPELEOLOGICAL SOCIETY,INC

C.O.G.nizance

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The June meeting of the Central Oklahoma Grotto will be held at 7:00 p.m, Friday, June 12, 2009. at the home of Duane Del Vecchio.

Address: 1117 NW 74th Street, Lawton, Ok. 73505 (construction - e-mail D for directions)

Home Phone: 580-536-5097

Carlsbad Restoration trip 2009

ANNOUNCEMENTS

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

*The 7:00 p.m. June meeting will be, Friday, 12th, at Duane's house,

MINUTES

CENTRAL OKLAHOMA GROTTO

Minutes of the May Meeting --
Held May 8, 2009, at the Town Home with good eats provided by Lil and Dale.

Present were: Lil and Dale Town, Dale Amlee, Anne Ault, John and Sue Bozeman, Jon Woltz, John and Elaine Talbot, Duane Del Vecchio and Dave McDermott

Jon Woltz began the official meeting at 8:30 after we spent an hour gorging ourselves with wonderful treats provided by the Towns. The deviled eggs are commended to all as super excellent! The chili and veggie stew was also wonderful.

We discussed the upcoming trip to Carlsbad on June 5-7. We agreed to meet at the Town's in Altus at 8:30 a.m. and configure final travel vehicles then. We discussed who would be the four people that would go to the Music Room and came up with Dale Amlee, Dale Town, Becky Hunsinger and Jon Woltz. The rest of us would do rock scrubbing duty off the main trail or wherever the NPS wanted us to scrub.

Sue Bozeman presented a cave lead that she and Anne Ault had gotten from a woman up in Guthrie. It is for a cave near Gotebo. Duane said he would check it out later in the summer. It is supposed to have 40's and 70's names scrawled in the bottom of a pit.

We then discussed the White Nose fungal infection decimating the bats in the caves east of the Mississippi. So far, none of our bats have had any problems, but we are on the lookout.

Sue Bozeman brought up the prices for previous publications as listed on the Grotto website. To charge $5 for early half-year issues of the Underground is a bit steep. Suggested making them $5 per complete issue and adjusting some of the other prices downward -- vote on the alterations was passed unanimously.

Lil Town reported an inquiry from a telephone message left on their machine. The name was indistinct, but the numbers were clear. Sue said she would try them before the next meeting.

Discussion ensued about the upcoming TV presentation of "The Descent" -- a movie that features caving. John Bozeman agreed to tape it.

John Talbot gave the Treasurer's report with the total earned being eleven cents in interest !!! and a total grotto balance at $3,393.00.

We gaveled the meeting to an end at 9:20 p.m.

Notes Presented by Sue Bozeman in the absence of Recording Guru, Steve Beleu.

TREASURER'S REPORTS

May, 2009

INCOME		EXPENSES	
DIVIDEND	$ .11		
TOTAL	**$ 00.11**	**TOTAL EXPENSES**	**$ 00.00**
CASH ON HAND	$ 182.97		
CHECKING	$ 516.49		
SAVINGS	$ 2,693.54		
TOTAL FUNDS AS OF 5/7/09	**$ 3,393.00**		

PREPARED BY TREASURER
JOHN TALBOT

GOOD AND BAD NEWS

GOOD: Duane and Gary are healing well after their surgeries.
GOOD: The Carlsbad trip went well.

BAD: May 17,2008, it was reported that Vickery Bat Cave in Oklahoma collapses-bad news for 700,000 breeding Mexican free-tailed bats.

TRIP REPORTS

Carlsbad Caverns, New Mexico: Restoration 2009
by Sue Bozeman, June 5-6, 2009

Anticipating 11 people at this year's Restoration Weekend, we all met at the Motel 6 in Carlsbad within 45 minutes of each other! The Hunsingers arrived from Los Alamos, Dale Amlee had hopped a ride in Weatherford from the Woltzes, and Dale Town on his motorcycle had led the Town Car with Lil, Anne Ault and John and Sue Bozeman comfortably ensconced inside.

We ate at the Red Barn that first night -- BBQ ribs or other delights of the carnivore kind. Anne was somewhat at a loss for choices but did not starve.

After breakfast the following morning at Happy's, we headed for an 8:30 a.m. meeting with NPS contact Tom Bemis. It took a half hour to get all the paperwork done and signed by all 11 of us: Dale Amlee, Anne Ault, Steve Beleu, John and Sue Bozeman, Becky and Mark Hunsinger, Lil and Dale Town and Jon and Kelley Woltz.

Then our assignments were presented: Haul new LED equipment and cable to a staging area and then clean formations in the Papoose Room. We were NOT expecting this assignment as we had been told in 2008 that we would be working in the Music Room for the next number of trips.

But we go where we're wanted and so we geared up, loaded the electrical equipment into the Town car and headed for the elevators at the Visitor Center. John Bozeman remained on the surface as he was skeptical of his abilities to see in dim lighting conditions after the recent ARN vision loss. Everyone else picked up whatever they could comfortably carry and went off after Tom like good little dwarves.

The equipment we were transporting consisted of $150 lamp fixtures and $1,000 LED control boards, plus a $1,000 roll of cable lights (heavy stuff, eh Steve and Dale?). All told, we moved $7,500 worth of equipment to the staging area and Steve stashed it behind some formations out of view of the tour.

Then we continued with the rest of the buckets (filled with whisks and toothbrushes and sponges) and water tanks to the Papoose Room near the King's and Queen's Chambers. This is a pretty area and had been muddied up in the past when tourists were formerly allowed to roam around at will. We were to start by cleaning a very pretty formation that had a layer of tan mud all over it. The crew had to be reduced to 8, so Mark and Sue went back upstairs, leaving the others to spray and gently mop up the grime for hours on end.

Eventually, Anne came topside having had enough and Sue went back down for the final hour and a half. We developed a method of using the sprayer to give water to an area that was then quickly blotted up by individual scrubbers and blotters. Once a sponge was saturated, it was gently thrown at Lil, who wrung it out in a bucket and then tossed a 'dry' one back to the blotter. Sounds nasty, but it worked!

Just before we called it quits for the day, one of the tour guides asked Tom to take her group as she had an emergency. Sue asked if we could be of assistance and the guide said only if we had first aid equipment. Sue did and quickly went to see what assistance could be provided. Turns out one of the tourists had an epileptic seizure and needed far more than a first aid kit.

NPS personnel provided oxygen and medical assessment indicated that a wheelchair was necessary. Before the wheelchair came, the woman had a second seizure (turns out her medication had been changed and had not yet been correctly evaluated).

Sue returned to the restoration site and helped tidy up the area. On our outbound trip, she and Lil helped the stricken family by distracting the young daughter whose Mom was having the seizures. We stayed behind awhile until the wheelchair crew arrived and transported her up the hills like the terrain was flat! Strong guys!

We had to wait for elevators as only two were functioning! But we eventually got upstairs and joined the topside group.

Tom gave us credit for 9 hours of work, each, so our Grotto efforts for the year are 90 hours. Good effort. Some of the photos of before/after area cleaning are great -- one by Becky was especially telling. Very good work. Look forward to seeing the new lighting which will happen first in the Papoose Room so we should see it next year!

Evening meal at Chili's took an hour's wait, but it was an enjoyable repast. A birthday dessert for Steve topped off the night. Hope you had a good one, Steve!

POTPOURRI

The Real Caveman

by Ed Grabianowski

http://history.howstuffworks.com/european-history/cave-dweller1.htm

We know that cavepeople existed -- early humans and other species closely related to humans inhabited caves. The question is, how important were cave dwellings to these primitive peoples? We'll probably never really know, because they left no historical records other than a few cave paintings and scattered artifacts. However, the general consensus among anthropologists and archaeologists is that caves very rarely served as permanent settlements. They may have provided seasonal shelter or been temporary camp sites for nomadic groups that moved from place to place, following the herd animals they hunted for food.

Some of the prehuman or humanlike species that may have lived in caves include Homo antecessor, Homo neanderthalensis (Neanderthals), Homo erectus and Homo heidelbergensis. Early humans, Homo sapiens, also used caves sporadically. Living as hunter-gatherers, these species didn't create permanent settlements. They had several ways of building shelters for themselves, such as stretching animal hides over bone, building rough wooden lean-tos or creating earthen mounds. When they came across a cave suitable for shelter, they used it.

The most common caves in the world are made of limestone, which is eroded by acidic water. Although there are millions of caves, many of them are unsuitable for shelter. The entrances may be located on an inaccessible cliff face, or the entrance itself may be a long vertical shaft. Surrounding terrain often blocks the view of the entrance to casual observers, which is why many previously inhabited caves remained hidden until modern humans rediscovered them. And it's not just the outside that's intimidating -- cave interiors are rarely safe places. They're filled with crevices, unstable gravel slopes, multiple entrances and exits, shafts and potential rockfalls. Once you move more than a few dozen meters from the entrance, they're also utterly dark. And without naturally occurring ventilation shafts, the air could quickly become unbreathable. A cave suitable for living in is actually quite rare

The Neanderthals are one particular species known to have had a predilection for cave living. They existed throughout a wide swath of Europe during a glacial period. The harsh climate forced Neanderthals to be adaptive, creative survivors. Archaeologists believe they used two main strategies: circulating mobility and radiating mobility. With circulating mobility, each group of Neanderthals had several temporary camps, some of which included caves, spread throughout a region. They moved from place to place in search of the best hunting grounds. With radiating mobility, the group had one central camp. Hunting parties headed out from camp, moving farther and farther afield to find food. In at least several cases, these main camps were caves [source: Tattersall]. The caves suited the Neanderthals' purposes especially well because they lived in very small groups of about a dozen individuals. Few caves could support a larger population. There is evidence that in at least one case, Neanderthals and early humans lived in the same cave at the same time and shared resources [source: Viegas].

Fungus Threatens Ancient French Cave Art

Jenny Barchfield, Associated Press

Discovery Channel

http://dsc.discovery.com/news/2009/02/27/france-cave-fungus.html

Feb. 27, 2009 -- Geologists, biologists and other scientists convened Thursday in Paris to discuss how to stop the spread of fungus stains -- aggravated by global warming -- that threaten France's prehistoric Lascaux cave drawings.

Black stains have spread across the cave's prehistoric murals of bulls, felines and other images, and scientists have been hard-pressed to halt the fungal creep.

Marc Gaulthier, who heads the Lascaux Caves International Scientific Committee, said the challenges facing the group are vast and global warming now poses an added problem.

"All of Lascaux's problems have always been linked to the cave's climatization, meaning the equilibrium of air inside the cave," Gaulthier told reporters at a news conference before the symposium. Now, rising temperatures have complicated matters by stopping air from circulating inside the caverns, he said.

"It's stagnating, immobile, frozen" inside the cave, he said.

This makes sending teams of scientists into the affected caverns risky, as their mere presence raises humidity levels and temperatures that could contribute to the growth of the different fungi, algae

and bacteria that have attacked the cave over the years, he said. Other factors behind the stains include the presence of naturally occurring micro-organisms and the chemical makeup of the rock that forms the cavern walls, Gaulthier and other scientists at the news conference said.

For the moment, the cave is completely sealed in hopes that "it will heal itself," Gaulthier said.

Two possible solutions to be examined at the conference include the installation of a system to regulate the cave's temperature and the use of biocides, which kill the bacteria and have been used in the cave before, with mixed results.

Scientists from as far away as the United States, New Zealand and Japan were scheduled to attend the two-day symposium. The conclusions could also help preserve caves in Japan and Spain.

In 1963, Lascaux, a top tourist destination, was closed to the public after the appearance of green algae and other damage scientists linked to the visitors. A replica of the main Lascaux cavern was built nearby and has become a big tourist draw.

Carbon-dating suggests the murals were created between 15,000 and 17,500 years ago. Discovered in 1940, the cavern is a UNESCO World Heritage site.

Ancient Cave Sheds Light on China's Past

http://dsc.discovery.com/news/2008/11/06/ancient-cave-china.html

Randolph E. Schmid, Associated Press

Nov. 6, 2008 -- A stalagmite rising from the floor of a cave in China is providing clues to the end of several dynasties in Chinese history.

Slowly built from the minerals in dripping water over 1,810 years, chemicals in the stone tell a tale of strong and weak cycles of the monsoon, the life-giving rains that water crops to feed millions of people.

Dry periods coincided with the demise of the Tang, Yuan and Ming dynasties, researchers report in Friday's edition of the journal Science.

In addition, the team led by Pingzhong Zhang of Lanzhou University in China noted a change in the cycles around 1960 which they said may indicate that greenhouse gases released by human activities have become the dominant influence on the monsoon.

The Wanxiang Cave is in Gansu Province, a region where 80 percent of the rainfall occurs between May and September.

Chemical concentrations in the stalagmite indicate a series of fluctuations lasting from one to several centuries and roughly similar to records of the Little Ice Age, Medieval warm period and Dark Age cold period recorded in Europe.

There were decade-long fluctuations between A.D. 190 and 530, the end of the Han Dynasty and most of the Era of Disunity, the researchers said. From 530 to 850 the monsoon declined, covering the end of the Era of Disunity, the Sui Dynasty and most of the Tang Dynasty.

The monsoon remained weak, with another sharp drop between 910 and 930, then it rose sharply over 60 and remained strong until 1020.

The researchers found that after 1020 the monsoon varied but was generally strong until a sharp drop between 1340 and 1360: the mid 14th-century monsoon weakening. It stayed weak, with substantial fluctuation, until a sharp increase between 1850 and 1880.

According to the researchers, the 9th-century dry period contributed to the decline of the Tang Dynasty and the Mayans in Mesoamerica. It also may have contributed to the lack of unity during the Five Dynasties and Ten Kingdoms period, they said.

The following strengthening of the monsoon may have contributed to the rapid increase in rice cultivation, the dramatic increase in population, and the general stability at the beginning of the Northern Song Dynasty, they suggested, adding that the end of the Yuan and the end of the Ming are both characterized by unusually weak summer monsoons.

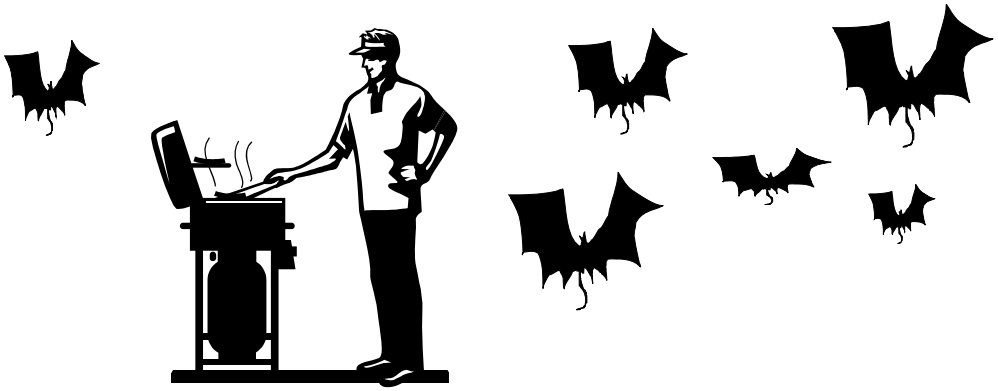
The research was supported by the National Science Foundations of the United States and China, the Gary Comer Science and Education Foundation, the Ministry of Science and Technology of China and the Chinese Academy of Sciences.

The Cave-dweller Era

The era that most people think of when they talk about "cavemen" is the Paleolithic Era, sometimes referred to as the Stone Age (it's actually one part of the Stone Age). It extends from more than 2 million years into the past until sometime between 40,000 and 10,000 years ago (depending on who you ask). Ironically, there are probably more humans permanently living in caves today that at any time in human history.

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!*

The June meeting will be at Duane's house, Friday, June 12, 2009 @ 7 p.m.



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