CENTRAL
OKLAHOMA
GROTTO
OF THE NATIONAL
SPELEOLOGICAL SOCIETY,INC

C.O.G.nizance

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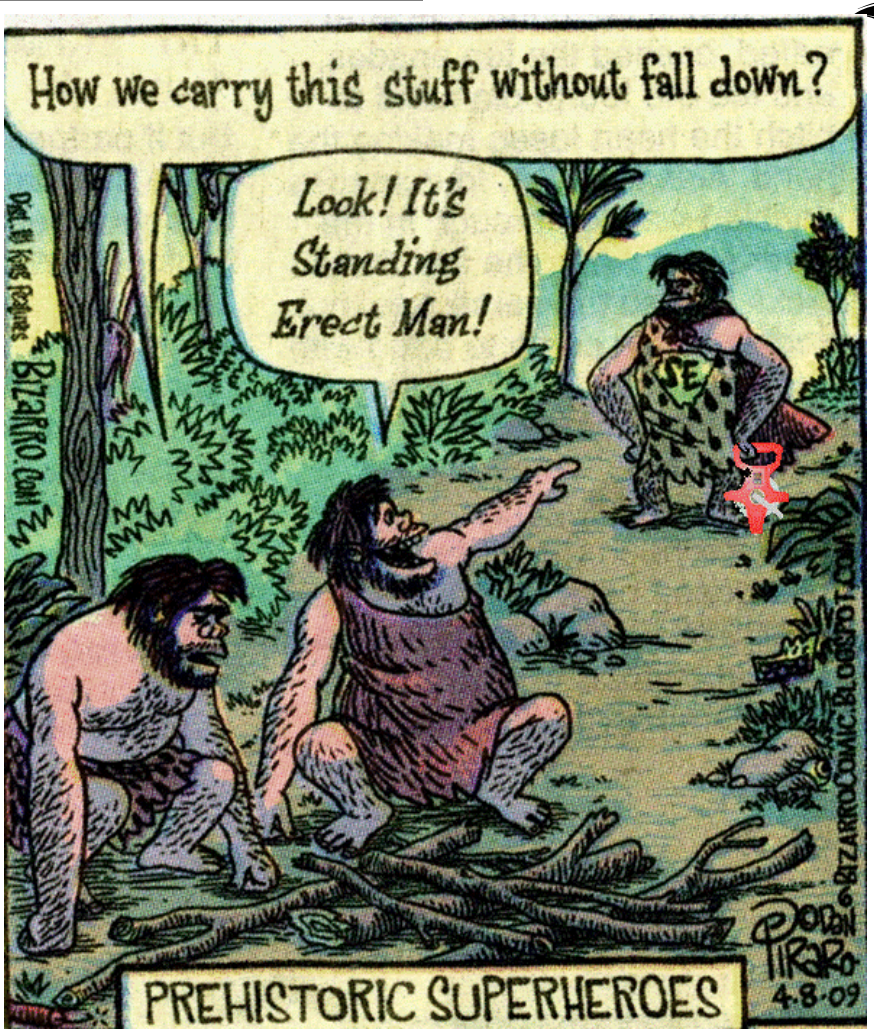
The November meeting of the Central Oklahoma Grotto will be held at 7:30 p.m. on Friday, November 13th at the home of Steve Beleu.



And he can also carry cave equipment and see where to put the next point! (but he never lost his crawling ability!

ANNOUNCEMENTS

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

*The 7:30 November Friday the 13th meeting will be at Steve Beleu's house in Norman, OK.

MINUTES

Minutes of C.O.G. Meeting of October 9, 2009

Members Present: (13) Dale Amlee, John & Sue Bozeman, Duane Del Vecchio, Becky Hunsinger, John Talbot, Dale & Lil Town, JW & John VanDyke, Art Wallace, and Jon & Kelly Woltz.

Jon Woltz called the meeting to order at 8:40 p.m. in the home of Art and Paula Wallace.

OLD BUSINESS

Steve was looking into the proposal by Joe Looney and was to make his report, but as he wasn't there so we tabled the proposal until Steve can talk to us on what he's researched.

We talked about the Fluke 411D Distance Meter[1] that the club bought last month. It was used in a survey on Broken Horn and proved to very accurate for cave surveying. It was tested against a tape measure four times and proved to be accurate each time. Hence, the tape was stored and lasers were shot from then on. Dale A. noted that the irregular end point sometimes didn't provide a good reading as the natural shaking of the individual holding it would make the laser point move on the far end…the further the point, the more movement. When trying to put a steady beam on the tip of a rock, it sometimes went beyond to the far wall. But they found holding a flat object at point (such as the back case of the Suunto[2]) made the reading firm. It was motioned and seconded that another Fluke 411D Distance Meter be purchased with grotto funds so we can have two survey teams working. Motion passed. Dale A. is investigating on how to waterproof (mud proof) the instrument for when we hit the wet mucky parts of the cave. Dale Town then gave us the background on Mr. John Fluke Sr.[3] on making the first electronic scientific measurement instruments and how his business has taken off.

We have passed the mile mark on Broken Horn Cave. Just when you think it's almost done, one of those small little leads turns out to be another arm. <grin>

We did donate $100.00 to the Sierra Club in Gary Harrington's name from the club funds.

NEW BUSINESS

The new grotto in South Central Oklahoma, Arbuckle Mountain Speleologists[4], was contacted by Cabela's[5]. Seems they have some property in Osage County (NW part of Oklahoma) and asked them if they wanted to investigate it. AMS contacted Jon who, after finding out the cave was really in TROG[4] territory, passed him on to the Tulsa group to open up discussions.

Sue received word back from the NSS[6] on the publication of Caves & Karst of the USA – The Official Guide Book to the 2009 ICS and NSS Conventions. The club voted to purchase a book for our library as some of our members have helped edit portions of the Oklahoma section of the book and it having some information on Oklahoma caves.

The next survey trip was moved from the standard 3rd Saturday to the 4th this month (Sat. Oct. 24th).

TREASURER'S REPORT

John Talbot gave a membership dues report for those who are expiring by Jan. 2010 and then followed with his financial report.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:20 p.m.

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LINKS from Minutes

[1] Fluke 411D Distance Meter: http://us.fluke.com search for 411D distance
[2] Suunto Clinometer: http://www.suunto.com Products -> All products -> Precision Instruments
[3] Fluke, John Maurice Sr.: http://www.historylink.org/index.cfm?DisplayPage=output.cfm&file_id=7699
[4] Cave clubs of Oklahoma: http://www.nssio.org/find_grotto_overview.cfm?state=OK
[5] Cabela's: http://www.cabelas.com
[6] NSS (National Speleological Society): http://www.caves.org

TREASURER'S REPORT

INCOME		EXPENSES	
DUES	$ 48.00	POSTAGE	$ 1.50
DIVIDEND	$ 3.54	EQUIPMENT	$ 108.32
		DONATION	$ 100.00
TOTALS	**$ 51.54**		**$ 209.82**

CASH ON HAND	$ 204.38
CHECKING	$ 482.08
SAVINGS	$ 2,700.31
TOTAL FUNDS AS OF 11/8/2009	**$ 3,386.77**

PREPARED BY TREASURER
JOHN TALBOT

TRIP REPORT

Trip report: Broken Horn Cave
Date: 24 October 2009
Cavers: Dale Amlee, John Bozeman, Jon Woltz, Mary Hicks
By Dale Amlee

This trip up to Broken Horn started out on a cool fall morning. We gathered the troops at the Bozeman house and drove up to the ranch (with the obligatory stop at Sonic for breakfast burritos), where we met up with Jon for the beginning of the survey.

The prior month we had surveyed a small arm that poked westward from the primary northern cave arm, but that arm had dead-ended in a small mud-filled impassable crawl. There was a second side arm that we had used as an entrance into the cave, but had not surveyed yet. This was our objective on this trip. Additionally, we wanted to see if the small mud-filled crawl, even though impassable by a human, might be connectable by voice to one of the several small sinkholes on the surface.

After donning our caving attire we headed over to the area in question. Three of us: Jon, Mary and I, would enter the cave and head to the mud-filled crawl that was the end of our survey from the previous month. Meanwhile John would stay on the surface and pop into the most likely sink hole to listen for us. When we got into the cave we would yell for John to see if we could hear each other through the passage.

After crawling to the end of the short passage Jon positioned himself as close to the mud-filled crawl as he could and yelled several times for John. Hearing no response, he decided to try another method… a whistle. He stuck his head just inside of the tiny passage and blew the whistle hard. This resulted in an immediate deafening of Jon, but no reply from outside.

We tried yelling some more for several minutes before concluding there was just no open connection to the outside. We backtracked to the exit arm and began our surveying.

This short arm was quite squiggly, with Jon and Mary taking numerous shots while pretzelled up into various yoga positions trying to peer through the compasses (compii?). We were using the Fluke laser distance meter again, and this did a good job for us during this survey. Once more, it allowed us to make a survey shot that would have been impossible with a tape. As we proceeded through the passage towards the exit, the cave takes a sudden turn upwards and one must climb / chimney / scramble roughly fifteen to twenty feet through a maze of breakdown boulders. Taking numerous compass shots through this breakdown field would have been grueling.

However, one small opening was spotted by Jon that lead nearly vertically, up through a tiny opening, to a point right next to the entrance. The laser made this shot nicely, and we finished our survey.

We found ourselves on the surface, with time to kill. John had wandered off, so we decided to poke our noses into some of the nearby sinks. One, in particular, looked promising. This was one that had been GPS marked in the past and given the name Oh-Wow. As we entered, we wondered why it hadn't been pushed before, since it really did seem like a viable cave entrance at first… easy stoop passage, curving around some boulders for a bit, heading east in the general direction of the rest of Broken Horn cave. As we went back about twenty feet we found out why it hadn't been pushed before: the only way to continue was to flop down in the mud and squeeze beneath several boulders. On a moist day like this, the mud was the consistency of fresh diarrhea. We thought about this for a minute, then decided to go ahead and push it through to see where it went. Jon was leading.

Within seconds we were all coated head to toe with sticky mud. Our cave packs now resembled little brown rocks with straps attached. As we crawled through some very tight passageways we also had to carefully crawl over some relatively fresh critter droppings, possibly from a porcupine or skunk.

After roughly fifty to eighty feet we came to an extremely tight portion of the passage we named the keyhole. There was a solidly positioned rock dead in the middle of the passage, and it took us each about a minute or more to figure out how to snake past it. Well, Jon and I took a minute or more… Mary just squeezed through with much less fanfare and significantly less grunting and groaning.

The cave passage turned to the left and continued on for quite a distance. We kept checking our compass direction occasionally, and after several minutes were surprised to see ourselves heading southwest. This was 180 degrees from the direction we were going in when we first entered the sinkhole. We had made a loop! Furthermore, we started seeing signs of survey points. Sticks jammed into mud banks, piles of rocks, and it gradually dawned on us that someone had surveyed this arm before. Who? Feeling quite confused as to our location we decided to reverse our direction and go back out the way we had come in. We backtracked for some distance, then as we crawled along I suddenly realized that I was crawling through pristine, undisturbed mud. I was now in a passage that we had not crawled through on the way in, and I had somehow lost our trail.

I now realized that I was in an unfamiliar passage, had lost our trail coming in, no idea where this passage led. I had a brief moment of… well, not quite panic, but uneasy trepidation nonetheless. I easily lose track of direction in a cave, particularly when it consists of numerous low crawls around above and below various boulders. I sat there for several seconds trying to make sure that I at least knew which direction we had just come from a minute before. I found myself mentally taking note of how many batteries I had in my pack and how much water I had brought with me. As we all scanned around for several minutes trying to figure out what happened to the trail, I finally saw our exit. It was the back side of the keyhole rock! The rock did a very good job of concealing our passage.

With an audible sigh of relief (cleverly disguised as more grunting and groaning as I slithered around the keyhole rock) I proceeded back out the passage to the sunshine once again.

After thinking about it afterwards I am now convinced that the keyhole rock is the point at which this arm connects with the main Northern arm of the Broken Horn cave system. The keyhole rock had clearly hidden this passage when the original survey had been done. I can only chastise myself for not seeing this passage during that earlier survey months ago, as I had been on that survey crew myself and normally pride myself on poking my nose into any small crevice to make sure there aren't any side passages along our way.

Our crew joined up with John back at the truck and we headed out for the much needed shower and the much deserved pizza.

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. Our Website: http://www.okcavers.com *Cave softly and safely!*

Remember the November meeting is Friday, November 13, 2009 at the casa of Steve Beleu.

Central Oklahoma Grotto
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Altus, Oklahoma 73521