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 11, 2010. at the home of Duane Del Vecchio.

Get there however you can. Good food, good friends, and a long social hour!!! Maybe we'll even talk about caving!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

The gang on the way to the Mary Jo Fletcher Cave(minus picture taker Dale Town). L to R - John, Sue, Lil, Steve (on sign), Anne (below sign), Dale A, and Duane.

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 beon Friday, June 11, at Duane's house, 1117 NW 74th Street, Lawton, OK 73505; Home phone: 580 - 536-5097

MINUTES

CENTRAL OKLAHOMA GROTTO

Minutes of the May 14, 2010 meeting

Host: the home of Dale Amlee

Attendees: Anne Ault, John Bozeman, Mary Hicks, John Talbot, Jeremiah and John Van Dyke, and S. Beleu

The Honorable Dale Amlee began the meeting late at 8:20 because it was important for us to eat and drink without surcease.

OLD BUSINESS - none

NEW BUSINESS

John Bozeman gave us a report about his investigation of a supposed cave that is east of Ardmore near the town of Dickson. He noted that this location would place it in or near the "Dornic Hills" limestone formation there. He had already replied to Chris Fredrick, who e-mailed us the original inquiry, and also shared this information with our contacts in the Arbuckle Mountain Grotto. He showed us an enlargement of an area along the Washita River in the Mannsfield 7.5" quadrangle from the 2009 fly-over whose aerial maps are available from the OK-DEQ website, and pointed to what he believes is the opening of a cave created by a stream draining into the river.

TRIP REPORT

Mary Hicks told us her trip to Lechuguilla Cave in May.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Treasurer John Talbot gave his report.

We concluded the meeting at 9:00.

TREASURER'S REPORTS

May, 2010

EXPENSES

DIVIDEND	$ .09
TOTAL	**$ 0.09**
CASH ON HAND	$ 196.80
CHECKING	$ 459.04
SAVINGS	$ 2,707.20
TOTAL FUNDS AS OF 4/12/2010	**$ 3,363.04**

INCOME

TOTAL EXPENSES $ 00.00

PREPARED BY TREASURER
JOHN TALBOT NSS#30254RE

TRIP REPORTS

No one caved last month. Sorry, no trip reports to publish.

POTPOURRI

Trilobite Quarry

http://atlasobscura.com/place/trilobite-quarry

Dig for your own trilobites in this goldmine of invertebrates

Miles off the main highway in no where central Utah lies a limestone shale quarry, a forty acre "gold mine" for trilobite enthusiasts.

This quarry is one of the richest deposits of trilobites in the world. Trilobites, hard-shelled, invertebrate marine creatures, roamed the ocean floor 500 million years ago. Trilobite fossils can be found relatively easily due to their near prefect preservation in the easily split limestone shale.

At U-DIG Fossils in Delta, Utah, owners of this prehistoric cemetery provide fossil hunters the opportunity to find the perfect specimen. The U-DIG staff exposes fresh rock with an excavator on a regular basis. Tools can be rented on site and the average visitor finds ten to twenty trilobites in a four-hour period.

NSS 2010 in Vermont: A Cool Convention

Pack up and come join your friends from August 2-6 in the beautiful Champlain valley of Vermont for the 2010 NSS Convention. Don't miss the early registration discount that ends June 15! You can register securely online at www.nss2010.com/registration. Bring all your caving buddies! You'll be just ten minutes from Burlington, a charming city between the beautiful Green Mountains and the incredible waterfront on Lake Champlain, with every water-related activity imaginable. This year's event will be great for the whole family with so much to see and do near the amazing Convention site:

- Pre-convention camp at the Adirondacks, the Sunday Geology field trip and a tour of the oldest granite quarries in the country.
- Howdy Party featuring Banjo Dan www.banjodan.com) and the Midnight Plowboys, tastes of Vermont, a variety of local microbrew and Ben and Jerry's ice cream!
- Great sessions, salons, section meetings, vertical workshops, competitions and our NSS Awards Banquet to wrap up the week.
- Plenty of caving opportunities, both horizontal and vertical, in unique marble, dolomite and talus formations.
- Junior Speleological Society section of the EXPO facility, including games, art, music, talks from renowned cavers and scientists, and JSS excursions that will include caving.
- Comfortable camping and a top-notch convention experience at the Vermont EXPO!
- Many other activities such as hiking, waterfall tours, biking,climbing, kayaking and sailing, diving, and lots of fascinating tourist attractions.

WNS? No Problem - If you live outside the WNS affected area you won't need to bring your own personal cave gear! There will be an extensive gear loaning station supplied by the Central Connecticut Grotto and northeastern cavers, so we strongly encourage you to leaveyours at home. Cavers from the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service will set up and oversee a full cleaning and decontamination station.

The NSS Convention and Vermont should not be missed. With an international airport, Amtrak, and bus service in Burlington, traveling here is easy. Everything you need to know about the convention can be found at www.nss2010.com.Don't sit at home alone; come join us for a week of speleological fun! CaVermont!

Dear NSS members,

It is now 10 weeks before the Vermont NSS convention. Are you attending?

Lets talk about caving, after all this is a convention about caves. Vermont does have some of the best marble caves around along with our neighboring state of New York. The caves selected we feel you will enjoy as a sample of Vermont caving while avoiding bat hibernacula. The majority of caves trips will be led as 95% of the Vermont caves are located on private land with trip size regulations required. The non-led trips will be limited in size and number per day. Led trips have been arranged to caves including Morris Cave, Weybridge Cave, Red Mountain Pit, Gargantua and Chiller caves in Mt Horrid's Great Cliffs, Hotwater Pond caves in the Adirondacks, and the Mill Pond Caves. There may be led trips to old hand dug mines in Vermont as well. See bottom of this page for descriptions of the caves. There will also be self-led Trips to caves in the Adirondacks in NY. They are located on state park lands that are open to the public. Directions to these trips will be provided at the convention.

CAVE DESCRIPTIONS:

Morris Cave – (VT) Morris Cave is one of the longest and best-known solution cave in Vermont. Expect an average of six hours to explore which offers nearly 2000ft of winding passages ranging from belly crawls to large rooms. There are several pinches in the entrance series that challenge larger cavers, but once one reaches the main room, the cave opens up. From there, one can climb down to the lake room, *(continued on page 4)*

up to highest point of the cave, or take secondary passages to a series of waterfall cascades or a marble corkscrew. The cave is formed in white Sutherland Falls marble and bedded out on pink weathering dolomite that can be seen in the floor in some parts of the cave. The cave is located near East Dorset, VT, and is approximately 2 and ½ hours travel south from the convention site. There will be several led trips and directions available at the convention.

Weybridge Cave – (VT) Weybridge Cave is Vermont's third-longest solutional cave at over 1500ft. It consists of a vadose entry passage with a 25ft climb down followed by a 45ft rappel into the main trunk of the cave, a long walking passage with comfortable ceilings and a great deal of clay infill. There are several points where the passage is nearly choked, but then opens again almost immediately. There are also a number of smaller, muddy side passages that drain the main trunk passage, and a larger side passage that travels about 275ft and drains the intermittent stream that flows into the cave through the entrance passage. The entire cave is formed in Belden's limestone, which further south in Vermont has been metamorphosed into Belden's marble. The cave is located in Weybridge, VT, approximately an hour and a quarter from the convention site. There will be led trips and directions available at the convention.

Red Mountain Pit – (VT) This cave has the single deepest drop in the northeast at 168ft, which can be rigged either as a single drop with a questionable ledge partway down, or a shorter drop followed by a rebelay and traverse and then a clean drop from the opposite side of the pit. Though no further passage is known at the bottom of Red Mountain Pit, the cave offers some excellent technical challenges as well as nice views of the marble strata as it descends through the Bascolm-Beldens formation. The cave is located near Arlington, VT, and is about two and a half hours south of the convention site. The convention will provide a led trip for vertically skilled cavers only.

Mill Pond Caves – (VT) The Mill Pond Caves are a series of three short hydrologically related stream caves, two wet and one dry. The upper dry cave is about 85ft long with one minor constriction and a series of rooms and domes. The insurgence cave is mostly small and wet, with about 75ft of crawls and pinches in the stream. The resurgence cave is connected to the insurgence cave, but blocked by breakdown, and has entrances at both ends of its 70ft of passage. There is an ear dip half-way between the sinkhole entrance and the resurgence entrance that guarantees getting completely soaked. All the caves are formed in Clarenden Springs Marble. The caves are located in Colchester, VT, and are about ten-minutes drive from the convention site.

Mount Horrid Talus Caves – (VT) The Mount Horrid Talus Caves are not quite a two hour drive from the convention site. At the name suggests the caves are in talus. In this case the talus is very massive and tricky to navigate through. The hike from the parking area to the talus caves will take at least an hour (uphill). There are three main so called caves in this area. Mt. Horrid Ice Cave, Gargantua Cave and Chiller Cave. The Ice Cave is the most cave like of the group, nestled under the base of a hundred foot cliff. Gargantua and Chiller Caves are complex and hard to figure out and hard to find. They have strong vertical relief and lots of tricky climbing is necessary. Ropes and vertical gear may be necessary to get to some places. The caves are quite clean with very little mud or dirt, just lots of sharp and unstable rock. The experience of simply getting to the talus area and the surroundings are well worth the effort. This area is not recommended for a family type outing

Burrough's Cave and the Hotwater Pond Caves – (NY) the Hot water Pond Cave System is a series of hydrologically related caves ranging from 2000ft to 25ft., with about 2700ft of known cave in the system. The longest cave, Burrough's, is also the resurgence for the system. It contains several multi-level passages and one of the largest breakdown rooms in NY, filled with climbs and meandering passages between breakdown blocks. Past the breakdown room is the bulk of the cave, mostly multi-level stream passage leading to gradually shrinking in feeder passages. The stream is lost towards the back of the cave, though sections of the dry passage drain away towards it. Next door to Burrough's is Rusty Stove, a narrow cave about 300ft long with walls covered in popcorn. Above on the plateau is Hotwater Pond Cave, the insurgence for the system, with about 250ft of walking passage and two entrances. Two other small caves, Porter and Neverellen, are also located in the karst. All the caves are formed in Grenville marble, which is ancient and so metamorphosed that it has reduced to many of its constituent minerals; igneous intrusions into the marble are also common. These caves are located in Minerva, NY in the Adirondacks, approximately 2 and ½ hours travel south from the convention site. There will be led trips and directions available at the convention.

A word on White Nose Syndrome. Nearly all known caves in the northeast have WNS. Caving Gear used during the convention may be a possible vector for the spread of WNS to other regions. To help minimize this risk, basic caving clothing and gear will be provided for cavers arriving from areas that are not currently affected by WNS. Cavers coming from areas already affected by WNS should bring their own gear. We expect to have a good selection of typical caving gear such as outer clothing, knee pads, helmets, headlamps, boots, cave packs, and gloves. However we cannot guarantee the selection, nor will we be able to supply vertical gear or carbide lights. Gear can be reserved at the convention the day prior to use. If you have gear that you can loan or donate, please bring it to the convention.

Vermont caves are one of a kind; you will have the most fun going the shortest distance in the longest amount of time. For the JSS, we have three caves with just them in mind.

See you in Vermont,

Rick Pingree, 2010 NSS Convention co-chair

TRILOGY: THE CAVES BENEATH LIFE

Written by Steve. Beleu, March 20, 2009

1. Far-Away Cave

On a wall of the cave's dangerously narrow pit
That writhes down through bedrock to depths
No human can reach are pictographs cut deep
Into the limestone that resemble no others
Either the creation of an imagination tormented
As that abyss that plunges towards earth's core--
Or this is history, not the history of our species
But another that was here and left long ago.

They recorded this as Far-Away Cave in a language
That we couldn't decipher even if we recognized it
As language: the strange science of this pictograph
Defies our sense of existence because we believe
Life must be one shape in only one time and place
And each life is only one life. But this was an existence
Whose touch was vision and whose thoughts became things.

What we see as pictographs they knew as data.

2. The Salamander Muses About What He Has Seen

No other predator tromps as recklessly as they do,
Neither raccoon nor skunk, porcupine nor mouse
That all move with stealth, and they think invisibility
Though we salamanders sense every change
In the air pressure of our caves as they hunt.
So we wait until they pass, safe under a stone
And they return outside to hunt there and eat
Or be hunted, killed, and eaten by killers
With sharper teeth and claws and skills.
But these other predators tromp and stomp
So loud they must not be hunting us; therefore
They must graze like the other creatures outside
That feed on grass and bushes. So why wander
Here into our home? None of us know why, not even
Our Council of Elders renowned for their wisdom
Not only of life here in our cave but knowledge
Of the strange lives of the creatures outside.

Surely these are the most unknowable of those
Who invade our home for they are completely
Beyond all salamander reason and therefore
Must not be from this planet and are aliens
From the moon or sun or from those stars
That fall though the sky in flames, so I say
Alien, they're alien! Hide from them, under
This stone or that stone, be quick!

3. Crystal Planets

The real world isn't red dirt and white stone,
Is neither the world of green and blue above
Nor the world of white gypsum down deep
But is crystal, green crystal to the earth's core.

***

The crystals you walk beneath
Reflect 1,000 suns from your lamp.
After the first burst of gold light
Comes an echo of light white
From the moon's reflection
Not heat but cold, white flame.

***

This dark green crystal, round and thick,
A bit flattened on top and bottom,
Is the Earth itself, not an image of it
But a duplicate stored in this cave.

Should the Earth we live upon
One strange morning disappear.
It would expand until it replaces
The just-vanished Earth.

This is why we cave: to touch
The duplicate Earth.

***

No clouds up there, nor stars in nova,
But more like a benevolent lifeform grown
Over everything that was unadorned stone
Is this layer of white gypsum in many forms
Like storm clouds scattered across the ceiling
Speaking to us in the silent language
Of rock and mineral, a record of eons gone
Long ago before microorganisms began to evolve
Until they eventually walked from side to side,
Then forward and forward. There's no reason
Why random colors and meaningless shapes
Can't be as detailed as precise drawings.
With no two anything alike the new order
Is simple as this: the infinite is here
Everywhere in every stone and between them.

***

Square blocks of dark crystal tumbling across
And as they tumble across white crystals
Freezing in place, no two surfaces aligned,
Mirrors and angles of curving space
That fall away from us to return behind us,
Past, future, and present fused together.

***

When we enter certain passages of this cave
Whose walls, ceilings, and floors are green crystal
We stand inside the larger crystal that is this cave
Just as this cave is embedded in the crystal
Of this planet, and the crystal of this solar system,
And the crystal of this galaxy, and the crystal
Of this universe, one crystal among others
In the infinite crystal of the infinite.

This is how we cave everywhere at once
Beyond form and non-form, beyond being and non-being,
Deep within crystals that fit one inside the other.

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!* Cog Website*: http://www.okcavers.com*

The June meeting will be at Duane's house, Friday, June 11, 2009.

Central Oklahoma Grotto
C/o 3208 Gettysburg Drive
Altus, Oklahoma 73521