CENTRAL
OKLAHOMA
GROTTO
OF THE NATIONAL
SPELEOLOGICAL SOCIETY,INC

C.O.G.nizance

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The October COG meeting will be at Art Wallace's house.

Address: 6208 NW 84th St, OKC, OK

TELEPHONE: 405-720-0367

Notice he stays out and she tackles the beast!!!!!!!!!

ANNOUNCEMENTS

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

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MINUTES

CENTRAL OKLAHOMA GROTTO

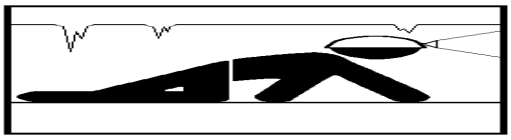
Minutes of the September 10, 2010 meeting

Host: the home of COG members Jon and Kelley Woltz

Attendees: Dale Amlee, Anne Ault, John and Sue Bozeman, John Talbot, John Van Dyke, Dale and Lil Town, and S. Beleu

The Honorable Dale Amlee began the meeting at 8:00

OLD BUSINESS – There will be no trip to Carlsbad this fall. Let's be hopeful about going next June.



NEW BUSINESS

- Dale Amlee, Jon, and I together delivered a trip report for our attempt to survey in Broken Horn Cave in June. High water everywhere we needed to survey defeated us. We were in the cave only about 45 minutes.
- Jon and Dale Amlee gave a long and detailed report about the SAR training that they received in August for which COG paid. Jon is writing a full report about it.
- Mary talked about her caving trip to Sequoia National Park, California, this summer.

Lil reported that she's recruiting a new member for us.

TREASURER'S REPORT
Treasurer-for-Life John Talbot gave his treasurer's report.

We concluded the meeting at 9:10.

TREASURER'S REPORTS

September, 2010

INCOME		**EXPENSES**
DIVIDEND	$ 0.22	
TOTAL	**$ 0.22**	
CASH ON HAND	$ 192.49	
CHECKING	$ 1,059.60	
SAVINGS	$ 2,110.57	
TOTAL FUNDS AS OF 5/7/09	**$ 3,362.66**	

PREPARED BY TREASURER ,JOHN TALBOT #30254RE

TRIP REPORTS

Trip Report
Cave Search and Rescue Workshop
Attendees: Dale Amlee, Jon Woltz
28-29 August 2010

This was not actually a cave trip, but rather a weekend long training section covering Introductory Cave Search and Rescue (SAR). It was sponsored by The University of Central Oklahoma at their Selman Living Lab facility near Freedom, Oklahoma. In addition to Jon and myself, there were nine other students present. The course was taught by Tom Bemis, who was well known to us through our periodic contacts with him at Carlsbad Caverns over the years, and his associate Pat Seiser.

Before we attended the training session we needed to take care of a couple of on-line pre-requisite courses put on by FEMA. These courses covered an introduction to the FEMA Incident Command System, which is a very detailed structure created by FEMA for managing and handling disasters and situations of virtually any scope and size. The courses took around four hours to complete online, and covered a great deal of theory regarding how disasters or incidents of various sizes can be handled. Reading all of this theoretical language regarding incident response pretty much turned my brain to jello. It also made it crystal clear why the FEMA organization failed so miserably during the response to Katrina. I could go into this in more detail, but it would fill a small book and this isn't a report about Katrina.

The evening before the start of the class, Jon and I car-pooled together up to the Selman ranch to stay at the UCO facilities. They have very nice accommodations up there. I had been anticipating that they would put us up in the "student dorms", which are tin sheds with plywood bunks and no real amenities beyond that, but instead we got to stay the weekend at the larger house on the property. This vastly more substantial building boasted several sleeping rooms, a pair of bathrooms, central air conditioning, hot showers, a nicely stocked kitchen, and a central living area that doubled as a classroom for the weekend. Dr. William Caire not only served as the host of this event, but also performed wonderfully as cook for the weekend.

A few of the people attending the course were from the immediate vicinity of Alabaster Caverns so had no need to stay the night, but most of the attendees for the weekend arrived that Friday night. This gave us a chance to get to know each other a little bit before the course began. The course attendees consisted of mainly two groups of people based on prior experiences: there was one group of cavers and people associated directly with caves (Alabaster Caverns administrators and such), and a second group of first-responder type people such as fire/rescue, EMT, park rangers and such. The first group knew caves but didn't know rescue, the second group knew rescue but didn't know caves. This made for a very good split of experience levels, which is exactly what Tom Bemis was hoping for. Each group had a different set of experiences upon which to draw and could share with the class.

The course began on Saturday with a few hours devoted to slide presentations dealing with the standard organization of the Incident Command System, but rather than simply a re-hash of the material covered in the on-line training sessions, this discussion was tailored specifically to how it worked in real life during caving incidents. The instructors had been through countless actual incidences over the years, so they were able to provide excellent insight into how the theoretical FEMA framework translated into real working systems on the ground. Both Pat and Tom have tremendous experience in this area, and their expertise made them perfect trainers for this type of course. I could not have asked for better teachers.

That afternoon we spent some time outside doing actual hands-on training in how to properly secure a victim (patient) into a litter for cave transportation, with particular attention paid to the lashing and protecting of the victim. Transporting a victim in a litter within a cave is much more dynamic as compared to transporting on the surface, and there is every chance that the victim may need to be rotated sideways, longways, or even partially upside-down while traveling through a cave. Securing the patient to the litter takes on a much more critical aspect when this is taken into account. Due to the commonly confined and convoluted passages in a typical cave, moving a litter in a cave can often require all sorts of odd methods of pushing, pulling, carrying, and dragging. Our group spent about an hour trying out some of the wide variety of propulsion methods that may be necessary in a cave, taking a loaded litter through an obstacle course that Tom created for us on the spot.

Sunday was the day for actual field training. We traveled as a group down to Alabaster Caverns, where we proceeded to conduct mock rescue training. One volunteer came along that day to play victim, and the rest of us took turns performing the various tasks required during such a rescue. Putting the theory into actual use was a great way to cement the knowledge in our minds. It also made it crystal clear why certain techniques were stressed so much during the earlier training sessions.

One key issue that became obvious to all was the critical nature of communications while in the cave. Cell phones or radios typically cannot work, and we ended up relying on wire communications using old military surplus phone equipment. Rapid, clear communication between rescuers in a cave and parties on the surface is absolutely essential. In spite of the rapid pace of miniaturized communications technology the rest of the world uses on a daily basis, none of those devices would work at all for us

(Continued on page 4)

in a cave. All of the best, latest greatest 4G Blackberries in the world would become nothing more than fancy paperweights once deeper than about twenty feet past the dripline in the cave. Instead we saw that the best technology for our use was essentially WWII vintage phone lines and handsets.

This weekend course was a basic introduction to cave search and rescue techniques, and while I feel that I learned a great deal, it also showed me very clearly how much more there is to learn in this area before one can truly feel proficient.

Broken Horn Cave
September 25, 2010
Dale Amlee and John & Sue Bozeman Trip report by Sue

The day dawned interestingly: taking my suet out, a tree bat squeaked and freaked out of the Rose of Sharon and splatted on our backlit kitchen window! Excellent start to a caving day.

Next came Dale at Jay's Entrance to Broken Horn. Crept in and commented on the musty smell at the entrance. Yeah, well, porcupines and raccoons make for a nasty smelling entrance. Yes, well, and so as Dale's boots disappeared, back came the comment, "Uhm, I think I see

as Dale's boots disappeared, back came the comment, "Uhm, I think I see a skunk. Nice shiny black fur ... I'm coming out!"

a skunk. Nice shiny black fur ... I'm coming out!" Ha. I asked Dale if he was SURE it was a skunk. His comment, "And I should have poked it???" Yes, well of course not -- silly comment. It's just that so many people have mistaken

It's just that so many people have mistaken a porcupine for a skunk in our gyp caves that I kinda sorta had to ask. So, not a skunkupine with shiny black fur ... probably truly a skunk. And so we went elsewhere

a porcupine for a skunk in our gyp caves that I kinda sorta had to ask. So, not a skunkupine with shiny black fur ... probably truly a skunk. And so we went elsewhere.

We went in Barrel Entrance to see how wet the center arm of the Trident was. Ha. Lots of frogs and crayfish -- also wall to wall water with deep sucky mud. We shot 3 survey points and left a nice high continuation point, but went back to the main passage to search for a side passage that Lil Town and Shawn Thomas had explored to an entrance pit on the mesa outside (called Mesa Pit Entrance, which we had rid of brush, deadwood and critters before entering at Barrel).

We headed downstream on the right Trident arm and discovered that the crew that had surveyed it had not finished the survey to the breakdown deadend! No wonder the map looked like there was way too much intervening breakdown between the two passages!!! So, although we did find a cute little side room (which we called The Gnat Room -- full of gnats, porcupine scat, ammonia and NO fresh air) and then the keyhole side passage that Lil and Shawn had explored, we stayed with the right Trident arm passage.

Since the main passage seemed not to have been surveyed, we decided to at least finish THAT! We were actually happy to be high and dry. We surveyed 75 feet straight ahead to a breakdown dead-end and then about 150 feet on the extreme left wall to where the rocky passage height became helmet high. Dale will choose which passage yields more passage length and delete the shorter length from the map, but we have gone as far as possible toward connection with the right arm of the Trident. We saw two pips and a flying velifer, we think! No WNS on the two sleeper bats! Thankfully.

So we still have the center arm of the Trident to do when the water is a tad lower (or absent!)

Oh, and for stunning funness -- on our way out, the quiescent pools of the middle arm of the Trident were RUNNING RED WATER!!! A storm had run through while we were inside for 6 hours and all the ravines and creeks were red-running frothy foamy water! You can bet we were shocked. I asked the guys if they remembered the pools being cascades? Uh, NO!!! Yes, well, they were NOW! I scampered ahead to see if we would be having to backtrack FAST to high-dome hinterlands or could we get out safely ... . No prob. Our entrance was well-behaved: the churning waters stayed to the southwest. We could get out high and drippy-dry. The drip line was weepy, but the rain had stopped. Outside, the ravine was a churning frothy waterrun. We had totally lucked out!

We stopped by to tell Betty that we were safe and thank her for letting us use her guest house to change in -- she was pleased and relieved to see us all out safely.

On our way home from Pizza at Fairview, I kept dodging roadkill of various sorts: skunks, porcupines, deer, black cats(!), dogs and coyotes. I happened to roll over something that we thought might have been a skunk, but we got no fragrance. The next day, by the light of day, our Jeep's right front and rear tires sported a patch of quills. Confirmation: not a skunk!

Good day of caving -- about 6 hours underground and surveying -- 11:35 a.m. to 6:05 p.m. Golly -- it's been a long time since I've had such absolute underground pleasure. Like a kid in a sandbox. Happy, happy, happy.

I've had such absolute underground pleasure. Like a kid in a sandbox. Happy, happy, happy

POTPOURRI

SUBMITTED BY STEVE BELEU

http://vehoae.com/2010/08/01/down-yonder-in-ishtaboli/#comments

The story, *Field of Honor*, by acclaimed author D. L. Birchfield, begins in 1976, the year following conclusion of the Viet Nam war. Lance Corporal Patrick Pushmataha McDaniel, a half-blood Choctaw, has been AWOL from the Marine Corps for eleven and a half years.

Birchfield diagnoses McDaniel with Stockholm Cowardice Syndrome Dysfunction (a disease first recognized in 1917 by a Swedish Clinic). The disease *"…rendered its sufferers capable, briefly, of nearly superhuman feats of athleticism"*, often resulting in *"Involuntary Instantaneous Overriding Psychomotor Overdrive Dysfunction"*. The U.S. Army updates McDaniel's emotional deficiencies to *"…a classic textbook paranoiac schizophrenic suffering severe alternating delusions of grandeur and persecution."*

Coincidentally, the film "One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest" (starring Jack Nicholson) was released the same year this story began (1976). Although the film's plot was decidedly different, *Field of Honor's* erratic, frenzied, and often hysterical action is quite reminiscent of that provoked by Nicholson's character, Randy McMurphy. *Field of Honor* also reminded me of the comical action and quirky characters in the book (and movie) *Catch-22*. It has been a long time since I let loose with a good ole' belly laugh while reading a novel – I did a lot of that while reading *Field of Honor*!

Okla Hannali, the story's setting, is a Choctaw district occupying the southeastern quarter of the Choctaw Nation in Oklahoma, with much of the action taking place underground. Birchfield punctuated the text with the Choctaw language; and his descriptions of places, animals, and events give readers a unique visualization.

Escaping Viet Nam due to misunderstandings, McDaniel spent his AWOL years turning all of McGee Valley into a secure sanctuary and a super strategic complex. He was under the impression that Marines were searching for him, 24/7: *"His problem…was that if he were going to kill at least half a battalion he had to lead them from one entrenched position to another. Half a battalion is a lot of men."* To that end, McDaniel stole machinery and artillery from military installations, one of his prize acquisitions being a prototype of the 210 mm Naval cannon which he situated atop a mountain overlooking the upper Valley.

By 1976, McDaniel was convinced the military had written him off. Thanks to proliferating misunderstandings, however, the Army and Marines descended on McGee Valley. The hilarity is enhanced by Zeb Calloway, McDaniel's *"moonshiner"* Uncle. The entire Calloway clan provided a singular example of a wild and rowdy family reunion.

Spelunkers will thoroughly enjoy *Field of Honor*, as a major part of the action takes place in caverns and underground beltways. It is into this subterranean maze that McDaniel temporarily escapes from the military. The telling of his discoveries is full of mystery, drama, a tad of science fiction, potential romance, and an oft-humorous discussion about Ishtaboli (the native ballgame of the Choctaw Nation, aka Stickball). There were hundreds (thousands?) of Choctaws, Nachez, and other folks living in this maze-like, underground city. But I'll leave finding out about the who, what, where, how, and why up to you.

Be prepared, though. Just when you have everything figured out, the story takes amusing forks in the road. Join Lance Corporal Patrick Pushmataha McDaniel on the ride of his life, at jet speed.

Field of Honor is a must read!

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!* *Webpage: http://www.okcavers.com*

The October meeting is at Art's house

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