CENTRAL
OKLAHOMA
GROTTO
OF THE NATIONAL
SPELEOLOGICAL SOCIETY,INC

C.O.G.nizance

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The Next Meeting will be on Friday April 12, 2019 7:30 p.m. Hosted by Dale Amlee.

An Ice Stalagmite in Greene's Cathedral found during the 2019 bat count.

A team of explorers discovered mysterious tracks at the bottom of Belize's Great Blue Hole. (Photo Credit: Getty Images)

https://www.geek.com/news/explorers-find-strange-stalactite-caverns-at-the-bottom-of-belizes-great-blue-hole-1776360/

ANNOUNCEMENTS

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

*The Next meeting will be Friday, April 12, 2019 at John and Tammi Van Dyke's.

WHITE-NOSE SYNDROME DECONTAMINATION PROTOCOL, September 2018

This is the latest formal revision of the national decontamination protocol to prevent spread of the fungus that causes white-nose syndrome. This document is the product of a collaborative effort with multiple federal and state agencies and several non-governmental organizations. Go to this website to view the detailed suggestions listed to help stop the spreading of WNS.

https://www.whitenosesyndrome.org/static-page/decontamination-information

MEETING PLACES FOR 2019

Apr – Dale Amlee
May – Jason Talbot (??)
Jun – Steve Beleu – self-noted 'The Skillful Ogre'
Sep – Jon Woltz

Oct – Art and Paula Wallace
Nov – John Van Dyke
Dec – Bozeman – Christmas Party

TREASURER'S REPORT

MARCH 2019 TREASURERS'S REPORT

INCOME

CASH ON HAND	**$**	**52.05**
CHECKING	**$**	**118.94**
SAVINGS	**$**	**2,165.05**
UNDEPOSITED FUNDS	**$**	**12.00**
TOTAL	**$**	**2,348.04**

Balance as of **1/22/2019**

EXPENSES

PREPARED BY
TREASURER JOHN TALBOT NSS#3054

MINUTES

CENTRAL OKLAHOMA GROTTO
Date: March 8, 2019

Attendees: Dale Amlee, John & Sue Bozeman, John & Elaine Talbot, John & Tammy Van Dyke and Jon & Kelley Woltz
Hosts: John and Elaine Talbot
Meeting gaveled open at 8 p.m. sharp by Tammy!

Chair Jon Woltz reviewed February's meeting notes.

1. John and Sue Bozeman did go to Betty Selman's 97th birthday party. It was well attended by friends, neighbors, family and her care ladies and their families. The cake was exceptional and sported "9" and "7" candles. A photo was taken and promised to us – at a future date. Betty seemed pleased with the turnout, gifts and hoopla. She said, "Too many birthdays!" With a smile.
2. The following week's survey trip did not take place – snows, rain and sleet were whipping about, making a water survey seem silly. Wet farm roads were also a concern – wet dirt tracks that skirt the wheat acreages accessing Grotto Cave would eat our vehicles in a heartbeat.
3. We discussed Carlsbad volunteering efforts. In view of the trifold increase in the cost of rooms and food due to the oil boom in the surrounding area, we opted to forgo offering help to the Park for the foreseeable future. We are not camping cavers any longer and cherish our amenities.
4. Caving on Saturday, March 16th, will happen if Steve is available. Jon is otherwise occupied. Sue and Dale are set for water caving! (Weather permitting.)

Treasurer's Report: Provided by John Talbot – No expenses or income -- Ending Balance: $2,336.04
Meeting adjourned at 8:58

Report submitted by Sue Bozeman

TRIP REPORT

NO TRIP REPORTS SUBMITTED FOR THIS MONTH.

POTPOURRI

REQUEST FROM THE BOY SCOUTS

A letter from Chris Schaefer:

A few years back you all did a presentation of caves and cave safety for our boy scout troop (Troop 219). We now have a new crop of boys and I was hopeful that you could do the presentation again.
We meet Monday nights at Goodrich Methodist Church in Norman. Ideally, we could meet with you on Monday April 22nd.
Please give me a call and let me know.
Thanks again. Chris

THIS WILL BE DISCUSSED AT THE NEXT MEETING.

Joe Looney Remembrances (Part I of III)
by Bob Stuemky

I connected with Joe Looney our freshman year at Oklahoma A&M in the fall of 1954, but I'd discovered caving earlier growing up in Tulsa.

My parents, sister and I began exploring The Ozarks and western Arkansas after gasoline became available following WWII. We visited many commercial caves--exquisite "Fairy Cave" also "Spanish Treasure Cave" are especially remembered.

Like kids today, a driver's license became our gateway to freedom upon age 16. With high school pals Sam Singer and Tom Kitchens, my sister and others, we drove to, hiked and explored many wild caves in Upper Spavinaw Creek, Barren Fork and the Grand Lake areas during idyllic summers and weekends 1951-53. Early adventures included *Twin Cave* near the Drowning Creek arm of Grand Lake plus another one in a hollow across from the marina at Upper Spavinaw Lake. This cave we found blocked at rear of main entry room by a small column so we decided to come back bringing tools for further exploring.
We did so one week later to (uncanny co-incidence!!) find that cave also being visited by the *Wofford* family--three teens our age from nearby Jay. They as we had brought a prybar and sledgehammer to slightly open the blockage. When Don Woffard pulled himself thru an enlarged opening, he dislodged part of the remaining column which fell, breaking his nose! Notwithstanding a bloody, crooked nose, Don led us another +/- 100 feet to where cave pearls were found. Before leaving to get his nose fixed, Don, brother Dan, and their memorably pretty sister invited us to return. Several weeks later they indeed led us to several sites--including the very cave property Murray and Mary eventually bought!

I first showed that cave and its surroundings to Joe and Nick in about 1956, including an old *still* for whiskey-making deep inside. The date seems unclear, but shortly after elder Looney purchase of that property, we did an overnight there with Joe and several others. Mary provided a delicious fried chicken dinner while Murray cited problems with foxes and coyotes killing chickens.
Such a beautiful cave and surroundings--I understand Murray and Mary deeded it all to the Nature Conservancy including that idyllic hollow draining into Spavinaw Creek.

THE LOCATION for the MAY MEETING could CHANGE AND be RELOCATE TO TAMMY AND JOHN VAN DYKE'S. STAY TUNEd in FOR FURTHER UP-DATES!

One of the largest bat houses in the world may save an endangered Florida animal

Elina Shirazi By Elina Shirazi | Fox News

https://www.foxnews.com/science/largest-bat-house-in-the-world-may-save-an-endangered-florida-bat

The new two-tier bat house can hold up to 250,000 total bats. (Elina Shirazi/Fox News)

MIAMI — South Florida's expanding population is putting a strain on some the area's first residents -- the bonneted bats.

Called one of the world's rarest bats, the animal is a federally endangered species that is unique to Florida. At night, it feeds on insects. During the day, it sleeps beneath barrel-tile roofs, in live and dead palm trees and pine tree cavities. They are about the size of an iPhone, and are known to fly high and fast.

But Florida's changing landscape has put the bonneted bat population at risk. As new development bulldozed pineland they called home, the number of bonneted bats dwindled.

"They need help too because they're creatures of nature and they have far less habitat with each year that goes by because they keep on cutting trees down left and right," said Bruce Chesney, founder of the Patch of Heaven Sanctuary.

The small bats were officially listed as a federally endangered species in 2013.

"Now, the question is, what do we need to do to get them to recover?" said Dr. Frank Ridgley head of conservation and research at Zoo Miami.

Biologists believe they have the answer.

Executives of the Patch of Heaven Sanctuary, a nonprofit organization dedicated to creating habitats for wildlife, in February finished building what they claim is the largest bat house in the world in an effort to save Florida's high flyers.

"Nobody else is doing this kind of work. Not on this scale," said Frederick Hubbard, the sanctuary's executive director.

The two-tier structure can house up to 250,000 bats.

The University of Florida boasts large bat houses of its own. "According to the [UF] web site, they're the biggest occupied bat houses in the world," Hubbard told the Miami Herald. "Our bat house is technically bigger. We're trying to get the wording right on that."

Hubbard says the bats tend to form colonies, living together and procreating.

The new two-tier bat house can hold up to 250,000 total bats.

"There's usually a dominant male, a large male who establishes and claims these coveted kinds of spaces and then he tries to attract females and the females tend to then be attracted to a male who is going to defend the territory and keep a safe space for them," Ridgley said.

Ridgley says the bats are vital to biodiversity and in fact helpful to humans.

"They're cleaning up our skies. They're providing all these services and … in some parts of the country, you know, bats literally provide billions of dollars of services to the residents," Ridgley said.

Ridgley said it's hard to know the history of the bats since they were only discovered as a unique species in 2004.

"There was very little known about this bat just about a decade ago. I mean they only knew of one place where they were roosting and it was a mystery across their whole range here in South Florida. Anything about them, you know, what kind of groups they had, what they need to survive. So there was a lot of intensive study going into answering some of these questions," said Ridgley.

Ridgley estimates their population is now only in the hundreds, and technology is helping them to keep track. One device they use, an echo meter, plugs into a cell phone and identifies the type of bat and its location based off of sound.

"They do a type of echolocation and supposedly they have some recorded sounds that they're going to be able to put up into the bat-house that will attract them," said Hubbard.

Hubbard said that if their project accomplishes its aim, it may help rewrite the fate of these bats who have lost almost all of their habitat. For now, he said they are patiently waiting for the bats to rent out their space.

"Come home," Hubbard said. "Well, how do you tell a bat to come home, but I guess if you could, that is what we are up to."

Explorers Find Strange Stalactite Caverns at the Bottom of Belize's Great Blue Hole

BY GENEVIEVE SCARANO 02.27.2019 :: 11:22AM EDT

A team of explorers discovered mysterious tracks at the bottom of Belize's Great Blue Hole. (Photo Credit: Getty Images)

https://www.geek.com/news/explorers-find-strange-stalactite-caverns-at-the-bottom-of-belizes-great-blue-hole-1776360/

The Great Blue Hole, a giant sinkhole located off the coast of Belize, is a top diving destination that's home to many marine species. A team of explorers recently traveled below this blue beauty's surface and discovered strange tracks and formations at the bottom of the ocean floor.

Last December, billionaire Richard Branson and Fabien Cousteau, the grandson of French conservationist Jacques Cousteau, joined an expedition to dive to the bottom of the sinkhole and observe its mysterious depths, Newsweek reported. The mission, which aired on the Discovery Channel on Dec. 2, showed viewers the sinkhole's eerie underwater world.

The sinkhole, which is over 1,000 feet wide and 410 feet deep, is one of the most bizarre natural wonders in the world. It first developed as a limestone cave many years ago, when sea levels were low. During the last ice age, sea levels increased again, which caused the cave to submerge below water and eventually receive the nickname "Great Blue Hole."

In December 2018, teams engaged in more than 20 dives to create a 3D map of the sinkhole. While traveling in a submarine and using high-resolution sonar equipment, the exploration discovered never-before-seen structures at the bottom of the sinkhole and other weird features, including overhangs, crevices, and stalactite caverns.

Now, two months after the mission ended, scientists are almost done with the 3D sonar map of the sinkhole. Once this map is processed, it will be shared with the Government of Belize and international scientists, so they can study the sinkhole's geology and environmental data, Aquatica Submarines, the submarine company involved in the expedition, said in a press release.

"Our greatest joy is seeing the look on peoples faces as they descend under the surface of the water for the first time to see the life that abounds just outside our daily routine," Erika Bergman, Aquatica's chief pilot and oceanographer, told Forbes in an interview. "Exploration changes a person's perspective, and as a company we intend to keep the spirit of exploration alive with our mission of 'Taking the World Underwater.

7,000-YEAR-OLD MOUNT SODOM SALT CAVE IS WORLD'S LONGEST, ISRAEL CLAIMS

BY KASHMIRA GANDER ON 3/28/19 AT 6:00 AM EDT

https://www.newsweek.com/mount-sodom-salt-cave-worlds-longest-israel-claims-7000-year-old-1377864

The Malham Cave in Mount Sodom, Israel, has been named the world's longest by researchers. The team who surveyed the cave system to the south of the Dead Sea believe it runs for more than 10 kilometers (6 miles), and say this estimate is likely conservative.

Professor Amos Frumkin, of the Hebrew University Cave Research Center, said the team at the institution have been exploring the site for decades, but advanced mapping technology enabled them to recently complete their survey.

A journalist walks in the Malham cave inside Mount Sodom, located at the southern part of the Dead Sea in Israel on March 27, 2019. - Israeli spelunkers announced on March 27 that a salt cave near the Dead Sea was over ten kilometres long, beating Iran's N3 cave in Qeshm to make it the world's largest. The cave, named Malham, is a series of canyons running through Mount Sodom, Israel's largest mountain, and spilling out to the southwest corner of the adjacent Dead Sea.

"It turns out that the Malham Cave is more than 10 kilometers long, which makes it the longest cave in the world," Frumkin said. The team believes the cave is around 7,000 years old, The Times of Israel reported.

Malham Cave has therefore taken the title of world's longest salt cave from the Namakdan Cave in Iran, which stretches 6,850 meters (4 miles), the researchers told Reuters. That was named the longest by a team of Iranian and Czech researchers in 2006, according to the Associated Press.

The dry landscape near the warren-like structure preserved the salt, and enabled an extraordinarily lengthy cave to form. It is unusual for a salt cave to reach more than a kilometer (half a mile) as the substance melts away in water. The team believe water from seasonal floods streamed through at least 19 openings in the mountain above, over millions of years, leaving behind deposits of salt, according to the Associated Press.

Amos Frumkin, a geologist and cave expert at Hebrew University explained to the Associated Press: "The salt layers are squeezed out from the sub-surface, where they are deposited a few kilometers underground, and while being squeezed out they form a mountain, which is rising still today, at a rate of about one centimeter per year."

Boaz Langford from the Hebrew University of Jerusalem Caves Research Center said: "This cave is definitely longer than our current estimate. While we don't have final figures yet, we can only fantasize about them. We definitely know that our current estimate will change."

Over time, the cave will get even longer, the researchers told Reuters.

The cave is near the the Lot's Wife pillar, which takes its name from the Bible story. The woman, who is not named in the Bible, is said to have transformed into salt after she turned back to look at the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah.

Langford and Bulgarian spelunker Antoniya Vlaykov from the European Speleological Federation led a team of international volunteer cave explorers to survey the site.

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 Lil Town, 25692 Mosier Circle, Conifer, CO 80433: All submissions to the newsletter should be sent to the editor: Lil Town, 25692 Mosier Circle, Conifer, CO 80433: Telephone: (580)471-1238: E-mail: cavemoose@gmail.com. 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!* Website: http://www.okcavers.com

The April meeting will be
Friday, April 12, 2019
At Dale Amlee's.

Central Oklahoma Grotto
Who turned off the lights Press
2119 Holly Oaks Lane #283
Weatherford, TX 76087