CENTRAL
OKLAHOMA
GROTTO
OF THE NATIONAL
SPELEOLOGICAL SOCIETY,INC

C.O.G.nizance

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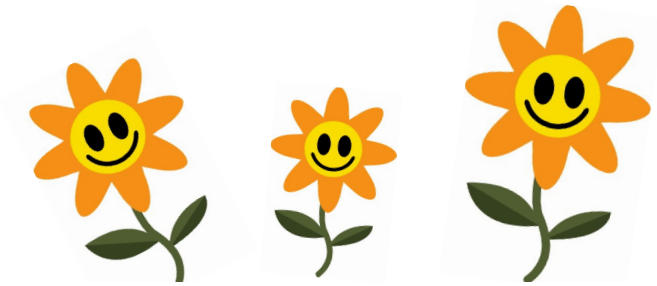
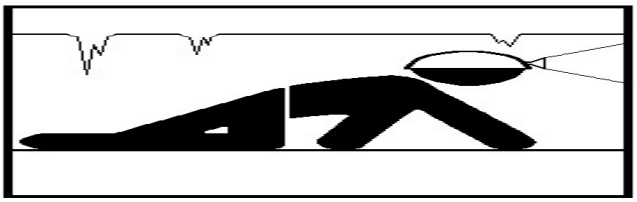
The Next Meeting will be on Friday May 10, 2019 7:30 p.m. Hosted by John Van Dyke.





GROTTO CAVE HERE WE COME!

Sue, Dale, and Jon gearing up! (Jon's hiding behind the camera.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

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

*The Next meeting will be Friday, May10, 2019 at John and Tammi Van Dyke's.

Congratulations to Jalynne Van Dyke who graduates from high school May 17th.

MEETING PLACES FOR 2019

Jun – Steve Beleu – self-noted 'The Skillful Ogre'
Sep – Jon Woltz
Oct – Art and Paula Wallace
Nov – John Van Dyke
Dec – Bozeman – Christmas Party

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

97TH BIRTHDAY
TO BETTY!

Thank you for all you do for us.

Betty and her care givers.

TREASURER'S REPORT

APRIL 2019 TREASURERS'S REPORT

INCOME		
DIVIDEND	$	0.27
TOTALS	**$**	**0.27**
CASH ON HAND	$	52.05
CHECKING	$	130.95
SAVINGS	$	2,165.31
TOTAL	**$**	**2,348.31**

EXPENSES

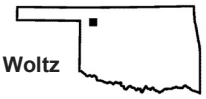
PREPARED BY
TREASURER JOHN TALBOT NSS#3054RE

4/11/2019

FUNGUS ART IN GROTTO CAVE: Pictures taken by Jon Woltz

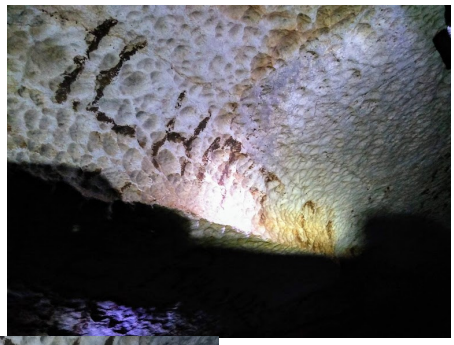
TRIP REPORT

The Grotto (Cave) Trip Report
Woodward County, OK
April 20, 2019
Survey team Dale Amlee, *Sue Bozeman* and Jon Woltz
Written by Sue Bozeman
Started at 12:30 p.m. ended 4:15 p.m.

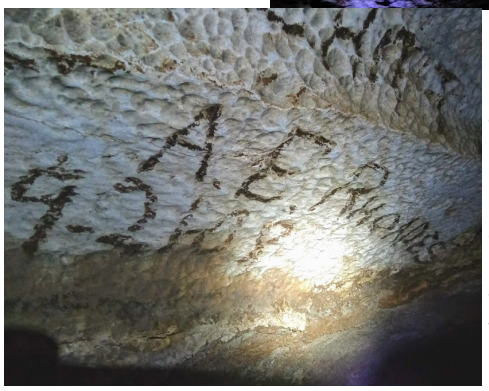


The day dawned bright and clear …. Yes, yes – get on with it. It had been yucky on Wednesday and Thursday. The ranch road leading to The Grotto stays yucky for several days with standing water puddles over deep silty mud washing off the wheat field. We had to walk in – it IS a hike.

We hiked in and got to our last internal survey point. First survey had us in water. Jon set point and did backsights; Dale did foresights; I took notes and tried not to get the book mucky.



The passage is decently high – 5 to 6 feet over a few inches of water over mud to thigh deep water in the passage arcs. It was difficult for the survey points to be read without getting nice and wet. (Since I didn't set the points, I didn't feel awful about them, but I sure was happy to be doing book!)



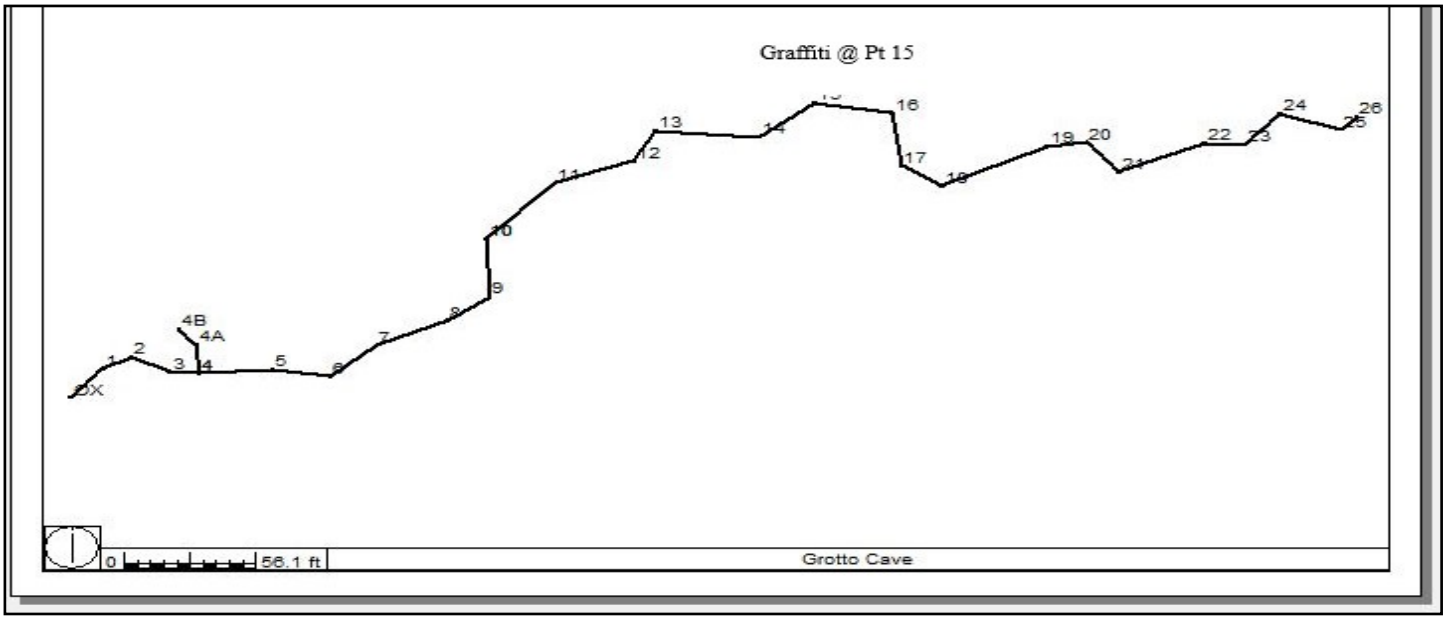
At about the 170 foot point of the day's survey, Jon spotted graffiti on the ceiling, in mud. Date: 9-21-08 and Names: A E Rhoades and Frederick ___ and I.L. H___l. Jon has subsequently searched cemeteries for these names and come up with something interesting. IF these dates were1908 instead of 2008, then these men may have been former owners or nearby residents. The following comes from Jon's research:

> "There's a grave marker in Cleveland, Oklahoma for an Albert E. Rhoades, 1882-1956. If it's the same person he'd have been 26 in 1908. The name on the ceiling was "Frederick"; there's a Frederick Rhoades buried in Kansas who would've been 33. I tried tweaking my photos of the other word above the "A. E." and I still couldn't make anything out clearly besides the "IL". Dale thought the last part might be "Hall"; if so, maybe it's this person. [Ira Lee Hall] Of course, this doesn't really prove that the graffiti is 111 years old or that these are the people who wrote it, but it's an interesting possibility."

We did about 456 feet of sinuous passage that gradually reduced in height to the 3-4 foot range. It wasn't until we'd gotten to our final point for the day that a side passage joined in and the water quit as a large pool.

Two things: 1) We think the water actually is a spring and comes in from under a ledge that goes back 11 feet, and 2) the incoming side passage is high and muddy and has fresh air blowing in. The big " … but" here is that there is very little debris in this passage which may indicate that we'll not be able to get OUT! It may be a breakdown choke. The next trip will tell.

We didn't see a single bat in this cave that day, but we did see crayfish all along our route.



MINUTES

CENTRAL OKLAHOMA GROTTO

Date: April 12, 2019Host: Dale Amlee
Attendees; Dale, Bozeman's (2), Woltz' (2),John Talbot,me
Supreme Potentate Jon Woltz Presiding

OLD BUSINESS:

We officially gave up trying to get back into Carlsbad Caverns on a volunteer-work basis. They want us not. But we remember those days and mourn that we can not return.

NEW BUSINESS

1. We got a request from a BSA troop who wants us to present our caving show to them on April 22. Three of our throng--the Bozemans and Dale--volunteered to address them.
2. CaveSim thanked us and asked for more moolah. The CaveSim exhibit will in in OKC on Saturday, April 27 at the Oklahoma Science Museum. The cheapest miser among us, me, moved that we give them $100; those present were stunned and shocked that I would do such a thing since I was wearing socks that night that I'd been wearing, with a few duct tape patches, since 1978. But the other members agreed to table this motion until our next meeting.
3. We celebrated the latest finding that Oklahoma's gypsum caves continue to show no DNA trace of WNS.

Supreme Treasurer John Talbot presented his report.

It was all over at 9:02.

POTPOURRI

U.K. diver who helped save Thai soccer team is rescued from Tennessee cave

April 17, 2019, 6:29 PM MDT / Updated April 18, 2019, 7:08 PM MDT
By Alex Johnson

https://www.nbcnews.com/news/us-news/rescue-under-way-u-k-cave-diver-tennessee-n995691

The man, Josh Bratchley, was retrieved safely by Edd Sorenson, another famous rescue diver, who said Bratchley's expertise likely saved his life.

A British cave diver who was part of the dramatic rescue of a Thai youth soccer team last year was himself rescued from a pitch-black underwater cave in northern Tennessee on Wednesday night, authorities said.

Josh Bratchley was retrieved from the Mill Pond Cave system near Gainesboro in Jackson County, about 65 miles northeast of Nashville, by Edd Sorenson, a veteran technical cave diver from Marianna, Florida, who is internationally known for many high-profile cave rescues.

Bratchley — who was made a member of the Order of the British Empire in December for his role in the Thai rescue last summer — was in good shape and refused medical treatment, the Jackson County Sheriff's Office said.

While Bratchley and his colleagues were conducting the rescue in Thailand last year, Sorenson walked NBC News through the obstacles they would have been facing. On Wednesday, Sorenson was able to rescue Bratchley.

Sorenson said at a news conference Wednesday night that he went into the cave system expecting the worst because of the cold underwater temperatures and the complete lack of visibility.

"Most of the time on rescues, when I get there, they're hysterical, they're panicked, and that makes it very dangerous for me," Sorenson said. But he called Bratchley "a consummate professional."

"Putting people in body bags all the time is no fun, and when you get to send one home, it's an exceptional feeling," he said.

Ethan Burris, a spokesman for the Jackson County Emergency Management Agency, said Bratchley was with a small team of British divers who have been exploring the cave system for two or three days. The group called 911 shortly after midnight Tuesday when members noticed that Bratchley was unaccounted for after their last dive Tuesday afternoon, he said.

Burris said the group's members waited to call 911 because they were unsuccessfully searching for their colleague themselves.

Lt. Brian Krebs, a cave rescue specialist for the Chattanooga Hamilton County Rescue Service — members of which were flown in by the state Highway Patrol to help in the rescue — agreed that Bratchley was largely responsible for saving his own life, saying that because he'd been in the cave the day before, he knew where crucial air pockets were.

"Luckily, Josh was found right where we'd thought he'd be," Krebs said.

Because of Bratchley's expertise, Krebs said, what had been feared to be a recovery mission of as long as two hours turned out to be a safe rescue that took only 45 minutes.

"He did not panic. Most of everything he did today was in his head, and he controlled that very, very well," Krebs said.

Derek Woolbright, a spokesman for the Jackson County Emergency Management Agency, said Bratchley had only one request when he emerged from the water Wednesday night: "He wanted some pizza."

Registration is officially open for the 2019 SBDN Bat Blitz
Submitted by Duane Del Vecchio forwarded from the Oklahoma Bat Committee

Registration is officially open for the 2019 SBDN Bat Blitz, to be held June 3rd through 7th at the Eastern 4-H Center in Columbia, NC! Registration is all inclusive for meals AND lodging, with a cost of $75 for students and $125 for professionals! We're also working on some great field trip options for all participants, so don't delay! To register, visit:

https://sbdn.org/product/participant-2019-sbdn-bat-blitz-registration/

SPACE IS LIMITED
– registration is first come - first serve.

And as always, let us know if you have any questions or concerns. We're looking forward to seeing you all on the Albemarle Peninsula in two months!
Sincerely,
Lisa Gatens (Lisa.Gatens@naturalsciences.org)
Ed Corey (Ed.Corey@ncparks.gov)
Katherine Caldwell Etchison (Katherine.Caldwell@ncwildlife.org)
Michael Morse (Michael_L_Morse@fws.gov)

The Missouri Orchid Farmer Who Ditched His Greenhouse for a Cave

Turns out there are plenty of upsides to growing delicate flowers underground.

BY ERIC GRUNDHAUSER APRIL 11, 2017
https://www.atlasobscura.com/articles/orchid-farm-underground-missouri-birds-botanicals

ORCHIDS ARE AMONG THE MOST delicate and fickle of all flowers, but they produce some of the most mind-bendingly beautiful blooms in the natural world. So it's little surprise that some people will go to extraordinary lengths to get them to grow just right.

For David Bird of Bird's Botanicals, those lengths involve growing his flowers in a cave located some 150 feet beneath a remote patch of Missouri woods.

Growing and tending orchids takes a remarkable amount of time and patience. Depending on the genus of the orchid (there are over 750 varieties, though the exact number is always in flux as more are created, or lost), a single flower can take anywhere from five to more than 15 years to bloom. Despite the complete lack of natural sunlight and soil, Bird says his cave offers the perfect environment to cultivate such delicate flowers.

"The cave is great because I get to control everything," says Bird. "I get to control that every day is a sunny day. I don't have to deal with two months of cloudy weather. The humidity is always good because [the garden is] underground, and it's pulling that cool cave air in to cool it, and it's already humidified." The set up is also a terrific energy saver, Bird says, since many of his components pull double duty. He uses grow lights that he says produce a good deal of heat, and he can either let that build up or lower the temperature simply by allowing some cave air in.

ADVERTISING: Of course this closed, efficient system can also pose unique challenges. A number of different businesses operate in the same underground complex, and when their needs collide with Bird's operation, it can be disastrous. "There was one time when a guy was running a forklift, a propane-powered forklift. He was right outside my space, and I told the manager of the cave this wasn't going to work for me because the fumes from that forklift could cause damage," he says. "In about a week I noticed all the flowers were dying. All the buds were drying up and the flowers were falling off." Bird lost six months of his hard-earned flowers before he and the cave manager agreed on a solution.

Bird first fell in love with orchids when he was in his teens. "My family took me on a vacation to Hawaii, and I bought five orchids and I never got over it," he says. Shortly after he finished college in 1981, he purchased 700 orchids from a grower, and from then on, he was in the orchid business. Throughout Bird's career he's worked with institutions ranging from the Denver Botanic Gardens to the International Peace Garden to the Greater Des Moines Botanical Garden. Eventually he started his own commercial orchid farm, Bird's Botanicals.

In the beginning, while he was only operating his business as a side project, he ran it out of a traditional greenhouse, but eventually decided he wanted to move. When he saw a sign for underground storage at the Interstate Underground Warehouse, he was immediately intrigued, thinking back to something a fellow grower had once told him. "I had a buddy a long time ago in Nebraska, and he always said, 'Greenhouses are overrated,'" says Bird. "He said, 'They're too hot in the summer, too cold in the winter. You don't have any control.' He said you'd be better off digging a hole, putting a roof over it, and growing plants in the ground." Bird didn't set out to find a cave to grow orchids in, but once he saw one was available, it just made sense.

He went to the manager, bringing one of his orchids along with him, and explained that he'd like to grow the flowers in a subterranean space. The manager asked what he would need, and Bird said all he'd need was power and water. The facility is largely devoted to the storage and distribution of items that need to be protected from climate shifts or moisture. Bird's plan to grow underground orchids was a first, but he got the space, and ever since, his underground operation has blossomed.

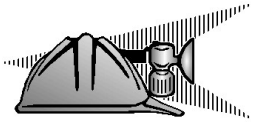
Today, the cave holds around 10,000 orchids at any given time. Bird also carries orchids that were grown somewhere else and brought in just to bloom, mainly the popular variety phalaenopsis, like you might see in any flower shop. But for the most part he prefers to sell his orchids in smaller settings such as farmer's markets, orchid shows, and his own open houses. "I like to take plants to the customer," he says.

He also dabbles in co-growing with fellow orchid producers, and even breeding his own crossbreeds, although a purely cave-grown variety has yet to bloom. "We're in the process. Nothing's bloomed yet," Bird says.

Bird's colorful flower bunker isn't likely to become the industry standard any time soon, but it seems to be an effective solution to dealing with a temperamental plant. It also brings Bird himself a great deal of joy. "The first thing you do when you go to work is you look through the benches, and you look through your plants to see who's new today. What's blooming for the first time, that you've never seen. And you go, 'Look at that. That's cool.'"

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 May meeting will be
Friday, May 10, 2019
At John Van Dyke's.



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