CENTRAL
OKLAHOMA
GROTTO
OF THE NATIONAL
SPELEOLOGICAL SOCIETY,INC

# C.O.G.nizance

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**The Next Meeting will be on Friday October 11, 2019 7:30 p.m. at John Talbot's house.**

Screech Owl outside of Jester Cave, Bat Count 2019.
Photo taken by John Woltz.

# ANNOUNCEMENTS

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

*The Next meeting will be Friday, September 13, 2019 at Jon Woltz home.

**MEETING PLACES FOR 2019**

Oct – John Talbot
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

# MINUTES

**CENTRAL OKLAHOMA GROTTO**
Date: June 21, 2019

Host: the shack and lean-to of Steve Beleu
There: Dale Amlee, Sue and John Bozeman, John Talbot, John Van Dyke, Jon Woltz, Beleu.
Guest: future caver Andrew Van Dyke.
Began: 8:04. Meeting presided over by Supreme High Potentate Jon Woltz.

**Old business:**

1. Treasurer Talbot sent $100 to CaveSim.
2. Those who took part in it talked about the cave presentation at Goodrich Methodist Church, Norman.

**New business:**

1. Jon Woltz spiffed up the 1986 COG slideshow for DDV to mount on our website.
2. We agreed what a good thing it is and will nominate him for an Oscar in the "documentary" category.
3. I complained about the less-than-zero security features of the NSS website.

The meeting screeched to a halt at 9:06.

**CENTRAL OKLAHOMA GROTTO**
Date: September 13, 2019

Host: the luxury home of Jon and Kelley Woltz in the metropolis of Weatherford
Attending: Dale Amlee, Sue and John Bozeman, John Talbot, John Van Dyke, Jon and Kelley Woltz, and Steve Beleu
Began: 8:05

**Old Business: none**

**New Business:**

1. John Van Dyke moved that COG make it an official policy to not share cave locations with any entity or inquirer out of respect for and as a basic understanding with our landowners; Kelley seconded the motion. We approved the motion.
2. We discussed the possibility of having a "fun trip" to a salt mine in Huntington, Kansas next summer or (better because cooler) late spring.
3. We discussed the upcoming cave trip.

Treasurer's Report: John Talbot presented his reports for July and August.

Ended: 8:53

**Rock Quarry Cave,** ERIN, TENNESSEE
https://www.atlasobscura.com/places/rock-quarry-cave

Hiding behind a grocery store is a spectacular cavern carved as part of an old limestone quarry.

With its beautiful rolling hills and bright green grass, it's no wonder Erin, Tennessee, is sometimes called the state's own little slice of Ireland. Head downtown, and you'll discover an awesome piece of the local limestone quarrying history hiding behind a grocery store.

While passing by the local Piggly Wiggly, you may notice something odd: a hole in a huge rock jutting up behind the building. The rock looks out of place, as if it were plunked within a flattened area dominated by business developments.

The rock is actually a large cave, artificially constructed as part of a limestone quarry. You can go inside and view its massive vaulted ceiling. There's a pool of water within the cavern, which remains a stunning shade of blue on most days. You may spot a paddle boat sitting within its depth, waiting to take to the water despite the cave's "no trespassing" signs.

The pool of water continues outside the cave, where it bleeds into a large pond. The pond has a couple of ducks you can feed, and you can walk a little path into the trees where you'll find an area with a smattering of benches.

If you go to the other side of the grocery store, you'll notice an additional interesting historical feature. There, you'll see a huge furnace built as part of the old quarry. It has a sign with it explaining the site and its history. There are also two other stacks like this furnace across the street.

**Know Before You Go**

The GPS coordinates lead to the Piggly Wiggly near the cave. The area says no trespassing, but the locals tend not to mind if you visit, as long as you respect the area. There are a few benches, but it appears as though someone has begun tearing them apart.

# TREASURER'S REPORT

**AUGUST 2019 TREASURERS'S REPORT**

| INCOME | | EXPENSES |
|---|---|---|
| **CASH ON HAND** | $ 52.05 | |
| **CHECKING** | $ 30.98 | |
| **SAVINGS** | $ 2,165.58 | |
| **TOTAL** | **$ 2,248.61** | |

*PREPARED BY*
*TREASURER JOHN TALBOT NSS#3054RE*

*8/05/2019*

**APRIL 2019 TREASURERS'S REPORT**

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

*PREPARED BY*
*TREASURER JOHN TALBOT NSS#3054RE*

*4/11/2019*

# TRIP REPORT

NO REPORTS THIS MONTH

# POTPOURRI

**Santa Fe Salt Caves**
http://www.santafesaltcave.com/
submitted by Steve Beleu, his summer trip

Relax in the Salt Cave and experience the healing vibes. We offer Halotherapy sessions at the top of every hour!

Time spent in the exquisite Santa Fe salt cave is an unforgettable experience, promoting both deep relaxation and natural healing. Lie back in a zero-gravity chair, in a room lined with Himalayan pink salt crystals, surrounded by gentle soothing music, and leave the cares of the world behind.

The idea was inspired by the discovery that salt miners rarely suffered from colds, respiratory ailments, or lung diseases, because of the fine salt particles they inevitably inhaled. As a result of the research subsequently carried out into this phenomenon, 'halotherapy,' or salt therapy, was born.

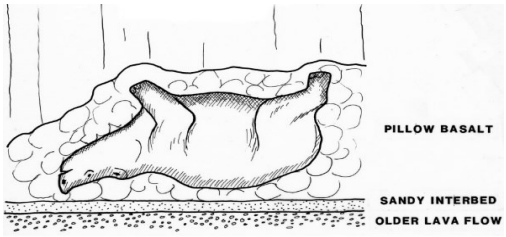
Salt is naturally anti-bacterial, anti-microbial and anti-inflammatory and studies show that salt therapy can bring about significant improvement in conditions such as chronic bronchitis, asthma, sinus congestion, COPD, allergies, lung diseases and skin ailments. There can also be an uplift in mood, since the cave is saturated with minute salt particles, which give out negative ions, known to help with depression. So a visit to the salt cave can have positive benefits from the inside out, body, mind and spirit.

Reservations are recommended.

## There's a Rhino-shaped Cave in Washington State

**BY MARK MANCINI AUG 7, 2019**

https://science.howstuffworks.com/environmental/earth/geology/rhino-shaped-cave.htm




**This diagram shows how the rhino was likely exposed by a glacial flood 200 feet (60 meters) above the surface of Blue Lake in Washington. Note the bubble-filled basalt from an earlier lava flow, the light-colored sandy sediments, which were once a lake bottom, and the pillow basalt surrounding the cave. COURTESY OF THE BURKE MUSEUM**

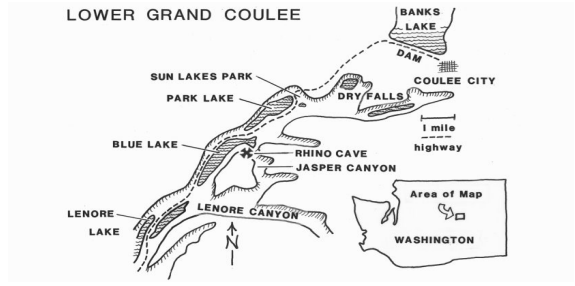
Not all fossils are bones. (Or shells. Or teeth.) Most of us would agree that mammoth tusks and *Stegosaurus*spikes are pretty darn cool. And yet, the fossil record is not limited to old body parts. "Fossils" are defined as any "naturally preserved remains or traces of [life forms] that existed in the geologic past."

If you'll excuse the pun, that covers a lot of ground. A fossil can take the form of a footprint, a leaf impression or a filled-in tunnel left behind by prehistoric land beavers.

One of the strangest fossils ever discovered is actually a cave. About 15 million years ago, in eastern Washington state, a volcanic fissure eruption sent lava streaming into a shallow river or lake where a rhino happened to be wallowing.

A layer of basaltic rock formed around the beast, preserving the outline of its (well-cooked) body. For millions of years, this rhino-shaped hole in the earth lay hidden in the cliffs of Washington's Grant County, near Blue Lake, a popular hiking destination.

By the 1930s, erosion had worn a hole into one end of the subterranean creature mold, exposing it to the open air. Here's the story of how the "Blue Lake Rhino Cave" came to be — and how four Seattle rock hounds accidentally discovered it.




**The great Grand Coulee and the vast Channeled Scabland, which dissect most of the Columbia Plateau, were probably formed in only a few weeks during the last Ice Age when an ice dam to the northeast was suddenly washed away. COURTESY OF THE BURKE MUSEUM**

### American Rhinos

Only five rhino species are alive today, and none of the living five species are indigenous to North or South America. However, from about 40 to 70 million years ago, rhinos were common in North America. Some — like the barrel-chested *Teleoceras* — were hippo-like, semiaquatic animals. Others had wicked tusks instead of the nasal horns we see in their modern-day counterparts.

Paleontologists think the Blue Lake Rhino Cave likely formed around the corpse of a *Diceratherium*. This type of rhino was sexually dimorphic, meaning that males and females looked visibly different from one another. While female *Diceratherium* were hornless, each adult male had a pair of small horns sitting side-by-side near the tip of his snout.

The dimensions of the Blue Lake cave tell us that the *Diceratherium* who left it behind was about 8 feet (2.4 meters) long from snout to rear and stood a little less than 4 feet (1.2 meters) tall at the shoulder. In life, the animal probably weighed 1 ton (0.9 metric tons) or so.

Nobody knows if the creature had already died when it became entombed. However, judging by the contours of the mold, it seems the body was rather bloated. This could indicate that decomposition was already setting in. Also, the legs are pointed skyward, telling us the rhino may have been floating on its back in a state of rigor mortis.

The cave's walls are made of 15-million-year-old pillow basalt, a kind of igneous rock that normally forms when lava contacts cold water and rapidly cools down. So dead or alive, the *Diceratherium* must've been hanging out in a body of water during a volcanic eruption. Then the lava came pouring in.

Lava can hit temperatures of more than 1,600 degrees Fahrenheit (900 degrees Celsius). Ordinarily, this ultra-hot material would've burned right through the beast's skin, flesh and bone. But instead, the cold water converted the molten rock into a tightly packed layer of hardening pillow basalt.

The corpse eventually rotted away and most of its bones disappeared. Yet the mold that enveloped the body stayed largely intact. Lagely, but not entirely.

**The rhino cave was originally located in the summer of 1935 by two couples hiking high on the cliff in search of petrified wood.**

### A Chance Discovery

When you think about it, the fact that we even know this weird little cave exists is pretty amazing. Millions of years after the thing formed, flowing water carved an opening in the mold, right about where the rhino's hindquarters used to be. Yet, erosion hasn't destroyed it completely.

Today, the cave's entrance is big enough for an adult person to enter. But getting inside may prove difficult for some visitors. You see, the Blue Lake Rhino Cave is located in the face of a cliff, about 300 feet (91 meters) above the lake that shares its name.

During the summer of 1935, the Peabodys and the Frieles — two adventurous couples from Seattle — were hiking around the cliff in search of petrified wood. On their trip, the quartet happened to discover the cave; Mr. Haakon Friele had the honor of becoming the first person in recorded history to enter the prehistoric rhino mold.

Inside, he noticed a handful of fragmentary animal bone fossils, including a partial jaw. These were sent to paleobotanist George F. Beck of Central Washington University, who couldn't resist visiting the site for himself. Upon gathering more bones, he enlisted California Institute of Technology paleontologist Chester Stock to identify them.

Stock determined that the bony bits came from an extinct rhino. Soon, the scientific community realized that the cave itself was a full body cast of that very same animal, a beast who last drew breath 15 million years ago.

In 1948, a team from the University of California at Berkley heroically scaled the cliff and filled the cave with plaster, creating a three-dimensional duplicate of the interior. Also, an exact, hollow replica of the cave was put on display at Seattle's Burke Museum.

Attempting to enter the real thing can be dangerous — the surrounding cliff face is quite steep. But hey, you can always listen to the musical tribute! The Ratfish Wranglers, a science-savvy rock band led by paleoartist Ray Troll, play a fossil-tastic song called "Blue Lake Rhino.

**Spirit Airlines passengers scream as stowaway bat causes commotion on flight**

By Alexandra Deabler | Fox News
August 5, 2019
https://www.foxnews.com/travel/spirit-airlines-passenger-bat-flight

A bat caused quite a scene when it was discovered on a Spirit Airlines flight last week.

According to a Spirit Airlines spokesperson, the stowaway mammal was discovered about 30 minutes into a flight from Charlotte, N.C., to Newark, N.J.

"It is believed the bat started its journey in Charlotte, flying into an overhead bin while our crews were doing overnight maintenance," read a statement sent to Fox News by Spirit.

Passengers tweeted video of the bat flying overhead in the plane. In the video, passengers can be heard screaming and one woman asking "It's not a bat, is it?"

The stowaway mammal was discovered about 30 minutes into a flight from Charlotte, N.C., to Newark, N.J.

The stowaway mammal was discovered about 30 minutes into a flight from Charlotte, N.C., to Newark, N.J. (iStock)

The bat was eventually caught in the lavatory and removed by animal control officers after the plane landed, Spirit confirmed to Fox News. The aircraft was then disinfected and searched.

"No one was hurt in this incident, including the bat," the statement from Spirit read.

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**When the bone-cave harvestman spider was listed as 'endangered'**

By David Keene - The Washington Times
July 22, 2019

**Out-of-control bureaucrats must be reined so that common sense can return to environmental regulation**

Until recently I had never heard of the bone-cave harvestman, which as it turns out is a little spider that lives almost exclusively in Williamson County, Texas and is listed by the Feds as "endangered."

Williamson County is north of Austin and the little spider like creature is blind, orange and resembles a tiny "daddy long-legs." They live their lives in totally dark tiny underground limestone caves which means that although their presence is having quite an impact on county residents, very few people have ever actually seen one.

The Endangered Species Act since its passage in 1973 has allowed the federal government incredible leeway in protecting species deemed "endangered." Animals, birds and bugs no reasonable person would consider endangered or even know much about can end up on the protected list and when that happens, Washington bureaucrats, public interest lawyers and judges can run wild using an incredibly expansive interpretation of the U.S. Constitution's Commerce Clause to justify pretty much whatever they want. In fact, while on the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals, Judge Alex Kozinski once wrote that he wonders why the Commerce Clause shouldn't be renamed the "Hey, you can do whatever you feel like clause."

When the feds listed the little bugger as endangered in the '90s, the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, which overseas goings on under the act swung into action and required the county to set up nine sanctuaries to protect the little caves in which they live and keep some $20 million on hand to protect them from their human and non-human neighbors. It seems that the greatest threat the little spiders face is from the fire ant, which considers them something of a delicacy, so the feds demanded that the county declare war on the fire ant.

County officials, wanting to be seen as good conservationists acquiesced and went even further, setting up 11 such sanctuaries. The feds came back suggesting that if 11 sanctuaries were better than nine even more might be better still and have been urging county officials to set aside even more land to house the little ants.

With protection also comes heavy fines and perhaps even jail time if landowners interfere in any way with the spider's lifestyle or habitat on their own land.

Those warnings are what got John Yearwood's attention. Mr. Yearwood is a decorated veteran and a native of Williamson County who lives with his family on a farm that has been in his family since 1871. Before the feds decided that anything he or his family does on his own land might affect the spider, the Yearwoods allowed and even encouraged local 4-H clubs and church groups to camp on and use the land for recreational purposes. They at their own expense even constructed a rifle range for the local 4-H shooting club. They charged for none of this.

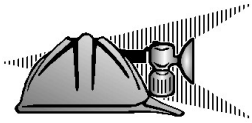
Once the feds put the spider under Endangered Species Act regulation, none of this could continue without a federal permit that would cost thousands or perhaps tens of thousands of dollars unless he was willing to risk penalties that could include a $50,000 fine and a year in a federal lock-up. Instead, Mr. Yearwood took his fight to court.

That was in 2015 when, with the backing of the Texas Public Policy Foundation's Center for the American Future, Mr. Yearwood and Williamson County initiated a suit supported by the State of Texas challenging the unlimited use of the Commerce Clause by the government to regulate matters that have nothing to do with interstate commerce. The spider the government says it is protecting has no commercial value and has never been in interstate commerce. As a practical matter, it cannot even exist outside the caves in which it lives and thus has little if any interaction with other creatures that might somehow find themselves in interstate commerce.

The Yearwoods' lawyers want the spider removed from the endangered list, which recent science shows is not, in fact, endangered, and are arguing that the Fish & Wildlife Service is basing its claim of jurisdiction on an absurdly broad 2003 Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals decision declaring that all species are interconnected and that as a result anything that affects any one species affects all. If they prevail … and other court decisions since 2005 suggest that they may … the Yearwood family and its lawyers may manage to do something no one else has thus far accomplished … rein in out-of-control bureaucrats and bring common sense back to environmental regulation.

**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 October meeting will be Friday, October 11, 2019 At John Talbot.*



**Central Oklahoma Grotto**
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(Now outlawed in 149 countries)
**2125 Holly Oaks Lane #105**
**Weatherford, TX 76087**