CENTRAL OKLAHOMA GROTTO
OF THE NATIONAL SPELEOLOGICAL SOCIETY,INC

C.O.G.nizance

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The Next Meeting is September 9th (No meetings in July and August.)

The June meeting of the Central Oklahoma Grotto was held at 7:30, Friday, June 10, 2005 at the home of Duane Del Vecchio. Because the editor was traveling before the deadline of the June newsletter, there wasn't enough time for it to be mailed. The first June newsletter is available on the COG web site, **www.okcavers.com.** This expanded June/July newsletter has been mailed to COG members and is also posted on the web site. Details about the September meeting location will be sent at the beginning of September.

The Editor

Congratulations, Roy on your recent accomplishments! Not only have you graduated, you are employed with the Edmond School District!

A picture inside Jester Cave taken by Duane during the March Fun trip. Other pictures can be seen on the COG website at www.okcavers.com.

Get COGnizance on the Internet!

Did you know the COGnizance newsletter is available online? The COG web site, **www.okcavers.com**, always has the latest issue.

If you'd like to always get your COGnizance online you can opt-out of receiving paper copies. Simply email Sue Bozeman at bozesj@cox.net. Tell Sue "Online newsletter only, please." In the future you'll get an email letting you know the moment the latest COGnizance is posted on the COG web site. Not only will you get your newsletter faster (no more waiting for the mailman), you'll save trees and COG's stamp money!

Missed an issue of COGnizance? You can get back issues from April, 2004 to the present on the COG web site.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

*Northwest trips are scheduled the third Saturday of every month. Contract Sue or John Bozeman for details.
*Southwest trips are scheduled the first Saturday of every month. Contact Lil Town for details.
*Roy is in the process of making plans for an exchange fun trip with an Arkansas grotto. He will keep us informed.
*There will not be a July meeting, sorry you missed the June BBQ at Duane's if you were not there!
*Roy also graduated and is now employed by the Edmond School District as a 6th grade teacher for the 2005-2006 school year!

MINUTES

CENTRAL OKLAHOMA GROTTO

Minutes of the Friday meeting on June 10, 2005

The meeting was held at the home of Duane DelVecchio. Duane, again, not only opened the door of his home to us but to his massive, well stocked beer refrigerator and kitchen. In the kitchen was an enormous amount of food he had prepared for us. Thank you so much, Duane!

Members and eaters present: Sue and John Bozeman; Jon Woltz; Lil and Dale Town; Nicholas and Dale Amlee; Nicole, Cassandra and Roy Diehl; John Talbot; John VanDyke; Anne Ault. (Hoping I didn't leave someone out. I forgot to send around a list.)

The meeting was chaired by Roy Diehl and began somewhere around 8:59 PM.

First on the agenda was reminiscing about Murray Looney. One of the founders of C.O.G. Murray passed away a few weeks ago. His services were attended by Sue and John Bozeman. Sue and John knew Murray well and told those of us who never got to know him, what a wonderful person he was. Not only was Murray a fine gentleman, but a fine caver. Tributes Murray Looney would have been proud of.

Old business and new business somehow got mixed together, so I will, as the emergency appointed minute's taker, just set down what was discussed and leave it to the reader to sort out to their satisfaction.

Equipment, such as clinometers, compasses suffered some damage during low, muddy crawls and needed repairs. A vote to fund such repairs was unanimously approved.

There was a discussion about Grotto funds being used to pay entrance fees to commercial caves for members when on 'fun' trips. No vote was taken as the membership decided to consider doing this on an individual basis.

The annual 'fun' trip this year will need to be scheduled before August 12 since several public schools will be starting classes earlier this year. A canoe trip on the Illinois or Buffalo rivers around the third week of July was discussed. Chairman Roy volunteered to arrange with members via email.

As of this meeting, Chairman Roy had not heard from Boston Mountain Grotto concerning a trip to an Arkansas cave.

Per written request of Mr. Beleu, since he could, again, not be at the meeting. He and Mr. Harrington have gone again into the wilderness to conquer something or another. Anyway, request from Beleu for a vote to discontinue mailing out newsletters and have them come to each individuals computer was discussed. It was decided that no vote was required. Individual members could decide how they wanted theirs delivered. Just notify Sue Bozeman by email giving her your delivery preference.

Green's Cathedral is still in the process of being surveyed.

Treasurer's Report was given by John Talbot. Meeting adjourned somewhere around 9:38 PM. *Minutes submitted by A. Ault*

CENTRAL OKLAHOMA GROTTO

Minutes of the Friday meeting on May 13, 2005

Host: Dale Amlee at his and his family's new house
Other members present: Sue and John Bozeman, Jon Woltz, Steve Beleu
Vice-chairman Dale began the meeting at 8:20

OLD BUSINESS

- Dale read a message forwarded from Roy Diehl concerning our proposed fun trip to Arkansas. A representative of the CRAG Group of the Boston Mountain Grotto says that they would like to come to Jester Cave and/or Nescatunga Cave and/or Vickery Bat Cave on the weekend of August 6 to watch the bat flights there in exchange for our journeying to Arkansas on the weekend of September 17 to visit one or more of their few horizontal caves. In our discussion of their proposal, we decided to reply that August 6 is a very bad date to view bats in Oklahoma in general and these caves in particular, better bat flights not occurring until a month or two later. So Dale will send them an e-mail suggesting that we switch these dates. We propose to go to Arkansas on August 6 to cave, and will invite them to come to Oklahoma on September 24.
- We assembled the final list for the Carlsbad Caverns trip on June 3 to 5. I will report this to Lead Officer Del Vecchio, who will report it to park personnel. The list: Dale Amlee and family (4), Anne Ault, Sue and John Bozeman, Duane Del Vecchio, Gary Harrington, Lil and Dale Town, Jon Woltz, Steve Beleu.
- John Bozeman reported that he has not yet had the COG compass repaired, and two more grotto compasses now need repair.

NEW BUSINESS

- Sue proposed that we begin to use Grotto funds to pay entrance fees to commercial caves and other caves that charge for trips. Because we had an overwhelming attendance of five grotto members this evening, we decided to table the motion until the June meeting to allow for more debate and a more representative vote. But we decided that it would be a good expenditure of funds, and recommend that this motion do pass.

TRIP REPORT

Sue told us about the trip that she, Lil, and Duane made to Home Place Cave, a cave new to us near El Dorado, Oklahoma.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Sue read John Talbot's report, which is included in this newsletter. Dale concluded the meeting at 9:07. *Minutes taken by Secretary Steve Beleu*

TREASURER'S REPORTS

COG TREASURER'S REPORT FOR THE JUNE 2005 MEETING

INCOME		EXPENSES
DIVIDEND	$ .12	
PUBLICATION SALES	$ 14.50	
TOTALS	**$ 14.62**	
CASH ON HAND	$ 36.30	
CHECKING	$ 574.16	
SAVINGS	$ 2,596.01	PREPARED BY TREASURER
TOTAL FUNDS AS OF 6/7/05	**$ 3,206.47**	JOHN TALBOT

COG TREASURER'S REPORT FOR THE MAY 2005 MEETING

INCOME		EXPENSES	
DIVIDEND	$ .11	POSTAGE	$ 13.32
DUES	$ 12.00		
TOTALS	**$ 12.11**		**$ 13.32**
CASH ON HAND	$ 35.98		
CHECKING	$ 559.54		
SAVINGS	$ 2,596.01		
FUNDS TO DEPOSIT	$ 8.94	PREPARED BY TREASURER	
TOTAL FUNDS AS OF 5/9/05	**$ 3,200.47**	JOHN TALBOT	

Murray L. Looney
July 20, 1914 - May 29, 2005.

Murray L. Looney was born July 20, 1914 and Died May 29, 2005.

That just states 'when' he lived, not how he lived. Murray was a gentle man. He is one of the founding members of the Central Oklahoma Grotto and was an excellent caver. He was the equipment manager for the group and would rework a carbide lamp for you if you managed to mangle yours into inoperability -- with a smile and an eye twinkle.

Not that he couldn't get a bit irritated at times of supreme human dumbness, but then who wouldn't? Murray was husband to Mary Looney, who preceded him in death in 1989, and stepfather to Nick -- also gone now (1999) -- and Joe. I've asked Joe to write up a piece for the newsletter, so I'll not step on personal toes and wait for his erudite words.

Personally, Mary and Murray greeted John and me with open arms in 1973. We were relative neophytes to caving and absolute greenies to Oklahoma caving. Our interest matched their passion and we stuck with the COG family quite happily. Murray managed all the grotto equipment, while Mary managed the people and FOOD! It was Oklahoma Caving at its best.

Always thin, Murray would be one who could slither through the cracks and is, I believe, only one of two people ever to have made it out the Texas Entrance of Nescatunga Cave. This is something no one wishes to do. There is nothing nice about that passage -- it just had to be mapped and Murray was half of the two-person mapping team. And, just so you know, Mary was NOT the other half!

The graveside funeral service was held at Row Cemetery, just north of Colcord in Delaware County, Oklahoma. Joe Looney spoke of Murray's life and accomplishments and the group then regrouped at the Farm for reminiscences and repast. The Farm is the retirement property that Murray had donated to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and contains the majority of January-Stansbury Cave, an important cave for several endangered species. It was Mary and Murray's dream retirement home which they shared together for 10 retirement years before Mary's death. The cave resurgence is in the front 'yard' and the water from the cave flows all year round providing a blissful murmur. The two-bedroom home is well maintained by the USF&W and will become a nature cabin for conservation groups, available by reservation -- soon. Submitted by Sue Bozeman

TRIP REPORTS

Those who went on Carlsbad restoration trip will remember the "Fact or Crap" game at *The Jersey*, the restaurant we ate at in Carlsbad. Roy, Dale, and Duane won a beer or a desert for their correct answers to the five questions that were given. they had to say if each question was a fact or if it wasn't true and was crap! The following trip reports are Anne's version of "Fact or Crap". Which trip report is fact and which one is crap?

DATE: May 21, 2005
CAVE: Greene's Cathedral, WhiteTail Entrance
PERSONNEL: Steve Beleu, Sue and John Bozeman, Anne Ault
Written by Anne Ault

I highly recommend this particularly pleasant arm of Greene's Cathedral.

It is almost all walking passage leading to a large room. Just a bit before reaching the large room, another side passage was discovered. Looks like it will 'go' and again, may be almost entirely walking passage. Can you believe it? At the back of the large room, shyly hiding behind a mass of breakdown, is a water passage, not accessible to human entry unless you are gill gifted. Yet all is not lost! Just to the left and over the water is a canyon slot! And it goes! The canyon is a little narrow, but again, walking passage. Isn't that great?

Time constraints prevented completing the survey of the canyon corridor and the new discovery. So, there is still some work to be done in the canyon plus the bonus of being offered a chance to survey the virgin passage.

For those who have missed out on this rare treat of going through the WhiteTail walkway, let me be the first to offer my spot on the survey team to you. It is so unusual to find such accommodating and "caver-friendly' passage, I want everyone who has not been through it, to share in this delightful experience.

Is this story fact or crap?

DATE: May 21, 2005
CAVE: Greene's Cathedral. WhiteTail Entrance
PERSONNEL: Steve Beleu, Sue and John Bozeman, Anne Ault
Written by Anne Ault

It had been a long time since I first encountered WhiteTail. But all the memories returned very quickly. WhiteTail is a hunky-dory name for the entrance and the entrance only. What comes after could be called by those who aren't pencil thin, "Compression Death", or "Terminal Hug." It almost immediately drops to a nice and wide, but vertically challenged passage. It took Steve Beleu a long time to try and dig his way through since he was chipping at bedrock. Finally he, with great determination and no helmet, got through. Most of the passage is 6 to 7 inches in height. Some places might go as high as 10 inches. (Wow!)

The passage does let you go to crawling on hands and knees for awhile, but guess what? Another low belly crawl. This is not a caver-friendly cave. Finally a reasonably large room is reached. Steve checked out a very low water passage at the back of the cave and pronounced it as a water only route. But up to his left, he could see into a canyon slot. So he, Sue and John continued surveying through the canyon slot. I decided I was going to stay where I was because I had begun to think I couldn't breath. There does seem to be very little air flow at the back of this room and in the canyon. The survey does need to be completed. But you can't take a canary with you.

The survey team returned, retrieved me and we headed back the same way we came in. The return went okay until that final low crawl. Steve was just using sheer will-power to get through. Since he couldn't wear his helmet, he got a nice gash on the back of his head. Of course, Dr. Sue got him fixed up. The gash only needed a couple of stitches. Steve was a manly-man and just screamed once or twice…but not real loud.

I have another name for that passage. You've heard of the "Death By A Thousand Cuts"? By the time you get out of this passage, your body will begin to think it's experiencing death by a thousand bruises. Oh, I suppose one could say the bruises were just cave tattoos…

Anyway, the survey of the canyon slot and survey of the new passage that was found, need finishing.

Is this story fact or crap? Now you decide.

Carlsbad:. C.O.G. Carlsbad Caverns Restoration Project 2005
Lower Cave Project
Date: June 4, 2005
Players: Jon Woltz,Gary Harrington, Dale Town
Written by Dale Town

Here's a quick synopsis of what we did in the cave.

After leaving the main group in a side arm off the main trail in the big room, the above personnel followed Tom Bemis to the entrance to the lower cave. A short safety briefing was given and then we descended the ladders. Tom took us to the bottom of the National Geographic entrance where we immediately noticed some debris caught by the nets that cover the pit. We retrieved a pair of sunglasses a few coins and some other cave flotsam from on top of the net and then climbed under the net to retrieve anything that the net missed....usually quite a bit.

(continued on page 5)

I was especially interested in the condition of the pool of water, since I'd taken special care to clean this out last year. I was disappointed to find that the water level had gone down by approximately ten inches and that a fine layer of silt was left covering the rocks. To some degree, the silt was probably left by last years clean up effort, however, the lowering of the water level did concentrate some of the silt into a smaller area. I immediately noticed several areas of "green" mud, indicating the presence of pennies. I removed the pennies along with some other coins and spent some time removing the silt from the surrounding rocks.

Meanwhile, John was involved in a minor mining project just above the pool. It seems that over the years, coins have managed to become buried in the mud surrounding the pool. Every time you scrape the surface, you come up with a coin. It was all too much for John. You'd think that he'd struck gold. He continued on until the vein of copper ran out.

Gary had cleaned everything that he could find above the pit and was happily watching us look for coins and waiting for John and I to finish our hunt. We broke for lunch and a potty break and then returned only for a few minutes to inspect the area, retrieve our packs and return to the Big Room to join the others.

Gary and I spent the rest of the day interpreting long the trail as guests walked by asking us what we were doing. For me, talking to people about caving and cave conservation is one of the nicest parts of the trip.

After leaving the main group in a side arm off the a trail in the big room, the above personnel followed Tom Bemis to the entrance to the lower cave. A short safety briefing was given and then we descended the ladders. Tom took us to the bottom of the National Geographic entrance where we immediately noticed some debris caught by the nets that over the pit. We retrieved a pair of sunglasses a few coins and some other cave flotsam from on top of the net and then climbed under the net to retrieve anything that the net missed....usually quite a bit. I was especially interested in the condition of the pool of water, since I'd taken special care to clean this out last year. I was disappointed to find that the water level had gone down by approximately ten inches and that a fine layer of silt was left covering the rocks. To some degree, the silt was probably left by last years clean up effort, however, the lowering of the water level did concentrate some of the silt into a smaller area. I immediately noticed several areas of "green" mud, indicating the presence of pennies. I removed the pennies along with some other coins and spent some time removing the silt from the surrounding rocks. Meanwhile, John was involved in a minor mining project just above the pool. It seems that over the years, coins have managed to become buried in the mud surrounding the pool. Every time you scrape the surface, you come up with a coin. It was all too much for John. You'd think that he'd struck gold. He continued on until the vein of copper ran out. Gary had cleaned everything that he could find above the pit and was happily watching us look for coins and waiting for John and I to finish our hunt. We broke for lunch and a potty break and then returned only for a few minutes to inspect the area, retrieve our packs and return to the Big Room to join the others. Gary and I spent the rest of the day interpreting along the trail as guests walked by asking us what we were doing. For me, talking to people about caving and cave conservation is one of the nicest parts of the trip.

DATE: March 26, 2005
PERSONNEL:
Visitors: Students from Bowling Green, Kentucky
CAVE: Jester Fun Trip
Written by Duane Del Vechio

Saturday - March 26th - C.O.G. met some students traveling around the country from Bowling Green, Kentucky who had contacted us to see about caving in Jester Cave when they came through the area. We wrote back and thus had a trip! We also had some members from the Maverick Grotto in Dallas/Ft. Worth area come for the fun trip. It was a COLD drizzly day on the surface but a fantastic trip on the inside of the cave. As ddv didn't bring his camera, these pictures are brought to you by the Maverick Grotto! Some great pics too!

You can see more pictures at:

http://okcavers.netfirms.com/trip%20reports/jester0305/picturesdscn8576.htm

DATE: June 5, 2005
PERSONNEL: Gary Harrington and Steve Beleu
CAVE: Spider Cave, Carlsbad Caverns National Park
WHO TO BLAME FOR THIS REPORT: S. Beleu

After COG, including we two, had worked on cave restoration projects on Saturday, June 4 in Carlsbad Caverns as part of our annual holy pilgrimage there, on Sunday all COG members but we two departed for home.

Since we were heading next to backpack in Dark Canyon, Utah, we stayed an extra day at Carlsbad and took the "wild cave tour" of Spider Cave.

Spider Cave is a 3+ miles cave that NPS gives ranger-guided tours through for $20 per person. The Park provides hard hats and electric lamps for each touree, but of course Gary and I used our own cave gear.

Eight non-cavers joined us for this 4-hour tour, so we two took up positions at the back of the pack. We hiked one-quarter of a mile down a canyon to get to the gated, down-ladder entry into the cave, then crawled about 30 feet through the entrance, after which we stood or briefly hands-and-knees crawled for 95% of the remaining cave. Spider Cave was surveyed and mapped during the 1960's by a combination of local grotto members and park personnel, with resurveying and remapping work continuing even now. After climbing five feet down the ladder and crawling in, the rest of the cave is horizontal with a few deep pits and canyons, one of which is named "The Grand Canyon". There are a number of

The unusual formations in Spider Cave, including helictites, and drapery the likes of which I haven't seen anywhere else, and which the two rangers assured us were nowhere to be found elsewhere in The Park. Some of the cave names: The Gnome Dome, The Curtain One, and The Curtain Two. We were in the cave about 2.5 to 3 hours total, wandering through the main passage and two side passages.

We can recommend this cave for anyone who wants to stay an extra half-day at the park. Two tours are given only on Sundays. It's well worth the $20 for a pleasant half-day of scenic caving. But dress light: the cave overburden is so shallow here that this is a hot, hot cave. Wearing our usual caving gear, we were both sweating like demons.

All that you need wear is t-shirt, shorts, knee and elbow pads, and your cave helmet. NOTE TO GARY: if you want to add anything as an addendum this report, send it directly to Lil. Hey, we did both Dark Canyon and The Grand Canyon last week!

DATE: June 5, 2005
PERSONNEL: Duane Del Vecchio, Anne Ault, Steve Beleu, Roy Diehl, Lil Town
CAVE: Carlsbad Restoration Trip: (area 24, off of the Big Room Tour)
Written by Duane Del Vecchio,

We checked in with Tom at Cave Resources and had a choice of a couple of assignments. One was an area we had never done before right off the trail in the Big Room; the other choices were in Lower Cave. We decided to try to the one in the Big Room with Dale, Gary, and Jon splintering off to go check out the National Geographic Pit in Lower Cave to see how a year has done to it (we cleaned it last year). The other five were shown the project... and whoo boy...what a project! Many, many years ago the electrical wires in the cave were buried with red clay dirt (actually...there's no red dirt...just red clay!!) People would walk on it and being the clay it was, it sticks to your shoes. Then everywhere else you go, you track the red clay with you... over clean formations if you have to pass by them, by the pond in the area we were at, and on the walls where slips in the past had people grasp the wall in a squeeze part. Also there is settlement in the first couple of feet of the pond. Another grotto had begun in the back of this area and cleaned high spots working their way down to the floor. We picked it up from there and started to work.

There is a skinny walkway with lake water on either side that is just red instead of the grays or whites it should be. We started at that point. There is a rock formation where the trail winds around and then up a bit to what we call the mushroom squeeze then back down to the back room where the trail after about 30 feet meters out. The rock formation was where Lil & Anne started. Duane, Steve, and Roy went past the rock, though the mushroom constriction and onto the trail beyond. Roy picked up from the other grotto work and came down to the floor where it forks. Steve and Roy worked on the high part of the path (path isn't really a good name as it's not any kind of trail or anything…) but you can tell where people walked. Steve and Roy started at the part of the path where the hole is in the ground and worked backwards. Duane worked on the mushroom area. Everyone's goal was to get to Lil & Anne's rock so that from that point on, only water shoes could be worn (to stop tracking the red clay on the soon to be clean floor).

We could get fresh water from the pond which we refilled about four times with the sprayers and used the existing water from the previous left over silt filled buckets for the initial fillings. We used brushes and toothbrushes to loosen the clay and then sprayed water on it and absorbed it with "super sponges" that could probably have sucked the whole pond up! <grin> There was one thing we particularly had to look out for… we could not let any 'dirty' water enter back into the lake. We brought along a couple of five gallon buckets for waste materials (clay and dirty water).

After working the morning, we took a lunch break and then returned back to work. About an hour later the lower cave crew came back and joined us. Some stayed on the trail and worked as interpretive guides, and others helped us. Roy, Steve, and Duane had cleaned from the back, to the mushroom squeeze, and to the rock where the girls were finishing that area.

Some of us then cleaned some of the stepping-stones to get to this area free of the clay that had been deposited on them. This put us in clear site (though a very good distance from the trail) so hence the trail interpretive guides.

One particular stone (when you hug the wall and have to step on the stone to avoid falling in the pond was cleaned and enough clay off of that one rock made a clay ball as large as my fist. The other rocks on either side were

(continued on page 7)

equally dirty. Though these were not part of our area, it is something that every person has to step on to get through so we thought at least cut down on further tracking.

The girls finished “the rock” and we pulled up stakes and left the area. We brought back two of the old silt filled buckets back to the top and left three that needed settling first so as to return the water or use it in further cleaning and left the two old buckets on the dock where the dump trucks get the rock hauled out of the cave near the pet kennels. Also left there was a collapsible bucket with the items retrieved from lower cave N.G. pit (coins, glasses, and wood chips).

We would recommend that only aqua shoes be allowed from the rock back to the back of the area as there is tons of clay before that point still to be cleaned.

POTPOURRI

Large Calcite Formation Found in N.M. Cave

By SUE MAJOR HOLMES, Associated Press Writer

Tues May 31, 8:48 PM ET
Copied from the internet

A calcite formation named Snowy River could prove a gold mine for scientists.

Snowy River, believed to be the largest continuous calcite formation in the world, was discovered in September 2001 by a Bureau of Land Management team led by veteran speleologist John McLean of Colorado.

The stark white passage, looking like a river of snow surrounded by walls of brown clay and black manganese dioxide deposits, stretches more than two miles from Fort Stanton Cave in sourthern New Mexico.

It's not a Carlsbad Caverns-type cave. Fort Stanton has few secondary formations such as stalactites; the one outstanding formation is Snowy River, expedition leader John Cocoran said Tuesday, the day the formation's discovery was formally announced.

Water originally carved a channel in the clay and gravel, then eventually filled it with brilliant white calcite.

It's not easy to explore. So as not to contaminate the formation, scientists who go into the passage change shoes — and in some cases, clothes — when moving from the clay edges to the Snowy River formation, Cocoran said. The round trip to the south end requires 16 changes of shoes, he said.

Scientists believe the new passage could yield information on everything from specialized bacteria to underground drainage, Cocoran said.

The original discovery drew a few local news reports, but scientists wanted to keep the passage's existence quiet until an environmental assessment could be done and arrangements could be made to protect it.

The emphasis for the future will be for scientific research and conservation — not recreation, Cocoran said. "It's a really unique formation," he said. "Nothing of this size or quality is seen in any other caves."

Researchers would like to know how the passage formed and how old it is. Initial study indicates the last time calcite was deposited was about 150 years ago, but the formation could be much older, Cocoran said.

Penny Boston, director of the cave and karst studies program at New Mexico Tech in Socorro, has been studying the microbiology of the passage. She has found several types of bacteria that live in a lightless environment and are unknown anywhere else.

"The chemical byproducts of these bacteria may have pharmaceutical applications and there are other things biologists and biochemists can learn," Cocoran said.

Fort Stanton Cave itself, which was designated a National Natural Landmark in 1975, is open by permit only. It is not improved, and going into it requires hard hats and boots.

The Crazy Monkey, as often signed by our renown Secretary, wrote the following at the end of the June minutes daring the editor to place it in the newsletter. In case you were disappointed not seeing this in the minutes, SURPRISE! Does the Crazy Monkey need some Anti-Monkey Butt Powder? (This product was actually seen in a store we stopped at when returning from Carlsbad.) Enjoy. The Editor.

Newsletter editor Lil Town says that she never reads the minutes before she assembles them into the newsletter. Let us test this -- if you’re reading this now, Lil indeed does not read the minutes first:

“We also had some special guests attend the meeting. Swami Rama, Mussolini, Hitler, Abe Lincoln, Mae West, and Al Jolson came to the meeting. They all wanted to learn how to cave. They reported that the afterworld—there is apparently only one afterworld with no heaven and no hell—has caves, but only horizontal caves. There’s no caving up or down because the ruler of the afterworld, Bubba-Ray Smedley, doesn’t want the dead to climb up through vertical caves to bug the living.” The secretary Steve Beleu

Anne read this in CaveTex, Monday, April 25, 2005, and thought it would be of interest to the rest of us.

CaveTex: Dallas Fort Worth
By GROMER JEFFERS JR. / The Dallas Morning News

Dallas City Council member Mitchell Rasansky is having a ball poking fun at a North Dallas Boy Scout who built three bat houses at Glen Cove Park.

"He's not from North Dallas," Mr. Rasansky said of the 14-year-old boy who built the bat sanctuaries as part of an Eagle Scout project. "He's actually from Transylvania."

Last Wednesday, Mr. Rasansky, who wants the bat houses removed, showed up at City Hall wearing a plastic bat on his lapel and sporting plastic vampire fangs.

But the father of the 14-year-old Boy Scout isn't laughing. Ira Richardson said the controversy created by Mr. Rasansky's remarks has embarrassed and ridiculed his son, who was only trying to meet qualifications for his Eagle Scout badge.

"He's a minor child who has learned a tough civic lesson about the political leadership in this city," said Mr. Richardson, who declined to name his son. "I don't know Mr. Rasansky, and I don't want to know him. He's used my kid as the butt of his jokes. He's used his phobia to politicize what would otherwise be a good public works project."

Chasity McReynolds, a spokeswoman for the Boy Scouts' Circle Ten Council, said that the bat house at Glen Cove Park was a good idea and that Mr. Richardson's son would get his Eagle Scout badge.

"They didn't just go down to the park and start putting up bat houses," she said. "He did a great job with the project, especially on the conservation side, and we're proud of what he did."

Parks Department officials, who approved placement of the bat houses in the park over a year ago, also are standing by the boy's project. But they said Mr. Rasansky's public opposition to the houses may cause them to move the structures to a more remote area of the park.

When told about the teenager's trauma, Mr. Rasansky, a former Boy Scout, had little sympathy. "I have enough people to take care of in my district. I don't need a colony of bats," he said. "We want people in our parks, not flying mice."

The bat houses were placed in Glen Cove Park in January, part of a project that included a 300-yard nature trail. Three houses rest on the east side of the park's creek, potential nesting places for Mexican free-tailed bats.

Bats are somewhat particular about where they live, experts said, so there's only a 50 percent chance that the houses will attract the flying creatures.

"Where do they want to stay, the Hilton?" Mr. Rasansky asked.

He first raised the bat issue at a recent neighborhood meeting in his northwest Dallas district. Asked whether he planned to visit the park and inspect the houses, he replied, "Am I supposed to take a wooden stake and a cross over there?"

Mr. Rasansky concedes that much of his dislike of bats come from being spooked by Dracula movies as a child. He acknowledges that his jokes and his anti-bat stance have attracted critics.

"One woman wrote me and said she wanted to drive a stake through my heart," Mr. Rasansky said.

Bat expert Ken Duble pointed to the success of bat colonies in Austin as a reason for the council member to rethink his position. During peak season, as many as 1.5 million bats call the Congress Avenue Bridge over Town Lake home, and they consume thousands of pounds of insects.

"That city overcame such ignorance decades ago in opting to allow a now-thriving colony of Mexican free-tail bats to roost unmolested beneath the Congress Avenue Bridge," he said in an e-mail. "Watching their swarm at sundown has become a tourist attraction. ... Any public figure making such remarks in Austin today would be pilloried in the media as the ignoramus he is."

But Mr. Rasansky says he's backed by a silent majority of people who fear being bitten by a bat and contracting rabies. The Scout, he said, should take his houses elsewhere.

"He should put the houses up in his back yard and see what his neighbors think," Mr. Rasansky said.

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Think about this next time you walk through a tick infested area!

From *The Encyclopedia of WEIRD*
By Sheila De La Rosa
Page 49

U.S. NATIONAL TICK COLLECTION, STATESBORO, GEORGIA.
Head for Georgia Southern University if ticks make you tick. No, the little eight-leggers aren't in class there; they're in vials!

The collection includes 760 specimens (yeah, they're dead) of the 850 species known worldwide that can carry such diseases as Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever. Each specimen notes where the tick was found, when it was found, what it likes to live on, who found it, its species, and an ID number. So far, more than a million ticks are floating around (literally, in alcohol) at GSU.

The United States isn't the only country that keeps tabs on ticks. Britain, Russia, and South Africa have tick collections too.

Bats live off of cotton pests

by Betsy Blaney
The Associated Press

Every night as the sun sets across Central Texas, an estimated 100 million bats take flight.
Sound scary? Perhaps to anyone but area farmers. These nocturnal mammals aren't seeking anyone's jugular.

They're headed to an aerial smorgasbord of agricultural pests whose offspring devour corn and cotton plants.

Nationwide, crop damage by pests and chemicals to treat fields costs farmers $1 billion a year, said Gary McCracken, a bat researcher from the University of Tennessee who is studying the bats' impact on insects.

"The bats really chow down on these moths in big numbers," McCracken said.

That big number equals about 1,000 tons of insects devoured each night in Texas, which claims the nation's largest bat population and the world's largest single bat colony. The bat is the state's official flying mammal.

The study, in its second year, will use infrared thermal imaging cameras to get a more accurate count of bats in Central Texas. Computer software will extrapolate population numbers from the images.

Other scientists will try to figure out how much of a bat's diet is comprised of moths.

"This is very important work, and we're happy to see it taking place," said Barbara French, science officer with Austin-based Bat Conservation International, a nonprofit group that works to protect bats and their habitats world wide.

Most of the state's bats live within a 100-mile radius of San Antonio but farmers in other regions feel their influence. '

The research could help the environment as well. Fewer pests means less chemicals to kill them. By eating the moths, bats prevent them from laying thousands of eggs, which in turn grow up to become corn earworms and pink cotton bollworms that chomp through crop fields.

"That definitely translates into a dollar savings to the farmers," said Patricia Morton, a spokeswoman for the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, which is part of the study. "It's a much more environmentally friendly in not putting those chemicals into the soil."
Female bats, which have only one pup a year, migrate to

Texas in March to munch on moths and feed their offspring. Each night a mother bat gobbles down two-thirds of her body weight. Surviving adult moth generations migrate through Texas on their way to Midwest corn fields.

"So our bats in Texas are the front line," Morton said.
If the bats in Central Texas eat enough moths, there will be fewer heading north to the world's largest cotton patch, Texas Cooperative Extension cotton entomologist Jim Leser said.

The research, funded by a $2.4 million National Science Foundation grant, took shape after mysterious large "clouds" appeared on National Weather Service radar in Central Texas in the early 1990s on otherwise clear days. The clouds turned out to be millions of bats.

Not long afterward, a weather service radar station in South Texas picked up more strange clouds intersecting with the bat clouds thousands of feet above ground. Researchers found the unknown clouds to be millions of migrating moths.

BAT FACTS

Here are a few more facts about bats:

Bats have lived in America since the age of dinosaurs. Forty-five species of bats live in the United States; eight are listed on the U.S. Endangered Species list.

The majority of bats in the United States eat insects; a few species in the Southwest and in Florida drink nectar and pollinate plants, many of which depend on bats for pollination. They drink water
by skimming close to the surface and gulping an occasional mouthful.

The Mexican free-tailed bat is a 12-gram mammal that calls Texas home from March to October, when they migrate back to Mexico for the winter.

Many species of bats roost in trees, others inhabit caves and rock crevices. Many of these bats thrive in urban areas, readily accepting buildings, bridges, and bat houses as alternative roosts.

Owls, hawks, raccoons, skunks, and snakes prey on bats. Humans affect bat populations by destroying habitat, killing, vandalizing, disturbing hibernation and maternity colonies and allowing pesticide residue on insects and other chemical toxicants.

The incidence of rabies in bats is extremely low and usually fatal. Humans should avoid picking up ill bats who fall to the ground as the bats could bite.

Although colorblind, bats see better at night than humans because they have echolocation, or sonar. Bats emit pulses of very high-frequency sound inaudible to human ears. By listening to the echoes, they can discern objects in their path. They can avoid obstacles no wider than a piece of thread and capture tiny flying insects in complete darkness.

WWW.BATCON.ORG/
WWW.TPWD.STATE.1X.US

Sources: Texas Parks & Wildlife Department, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, and Bats of the United States by Michael J. Harvey, Tennessee Technological University; J. Scott Atlenbach, University of New Mexico and Troy L. Best, Auburn University.

Here are some pictures from various caving trips that have been made recently

Group going into Jester on fun trip.

A Short stop Roswell on way back from Carlsbad

Duane lining up for the perfect shot

Looking down from motel room in Carlsbad

Steve brushing his teeth?

Jon, thinking about all the coins!

Gypsum Caving Bagatelles—7

Written by Steve Beleu

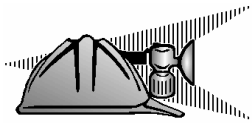
Central Oklahoma Grotto is a non-profit organization and a chapter of the NSS (National Speleological Society), Cave Avenue, Huntsville, AL., 35810. Dedicated to cave conservation and safety, C.O.G. published general information in a monthly newsletter ($6.00/year) and detailed cave surveys and related 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!*

Don't forget - there won't be a July or August meeting.

Check your email for plans for an August fun trip.

There are plans in July for a Jester trip.

Next meeting is Friday, Sept. 9, at Jon Woltz's



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