CENTRAL
OKLAHOMA
GROTTO
OF THE NATIONAL
SPELEOLOGICAL SOCIETY,INC

C.O.G.nizance

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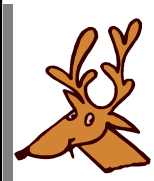
The December meeting of the Central Oklahoma Grotto will be held at the home of Sue and John Bozeman at 8:00 p.m. on Friday, December 14, 2007.



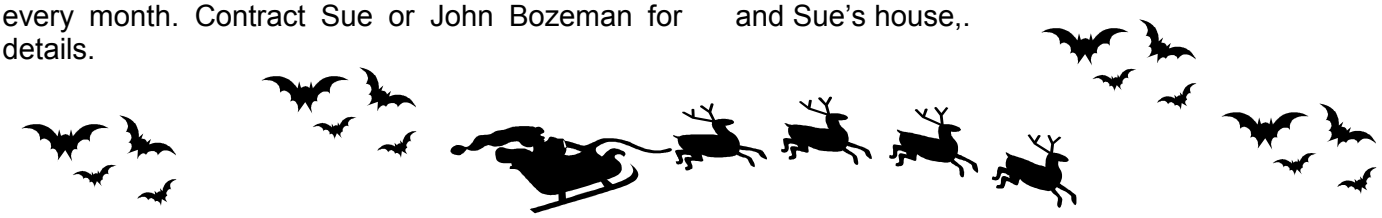
Remember that the December meeting is at the Bozeman's and it's the annual grotto Christmas Party. Be sure to bring a goodie to share!

John Bozeman, John VanDyke and his son Jeremiah, are checking to see if there are any bugs on this bat during the bug collecting trip at Jester Cave.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

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

*The 7:30 December meeting will be at the John and Sue's house,.



MINUTES

CENTRAL OKLAHOMA GROTTO
Minutes of the meeting of October 12, 2007

Host: Art Wallace and family in his sumptuous new house
Atttendees: Dale Amlee, Anne Ault, Sue and John Bozeman, Duane Del Vecchio, Mark Miller, John Talbot, Jon van Dyke, S Beleu.

Secretary/De Facto Vice-Chair John Talbot began the meeting at 8:10

OLD BUSINESS

We discussed our idea of inserting netting or like materials into water tanks so that bats can crawl out of them rather than drown, but we took no action.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Sue noted that she got a phone call from Dr. G.O Graening (who wrote the report on Duncan Field Cave in the July 2007 issue of the "NSS Bulletin"). He wants to digitize the cave data from our files, including survey data. From this and other data gathered from other caves in our state the University of Oklahoma will publish a book about invertebrate cave and other underground life in Oklahoma. He will send us critter sampling gear and the instructions for using it. He agrees that our data can have the latitude-longitude coordinates deleted from it to protect the landowners that we work with, and asserts that the publication will reveal no cave locations. We discussed this action, and agreed that we can take samples for him whenever we cave. John Bozeman made a motion that we participate in this project, and we voted to do so.
2. I passed a full-sized, color copy of the National Karst map around.
3. Duane reported that the COG slide show is now digitized for The New Age. He asked our permission to place it on the COG website, and we agreed that this would be a good thing. Kudos to DDV, Master of All Technology!

Sue noted that Roy Diehl hasn't written the report for the next *Oklahoma Underground* that he promised to write several years ago, and called for someone else to write it (a walk-through tour of Cattle Cave). Dale Amlee volunteered to write the report for the south end of the cave; Team Bozeman will write the report for the north end of the cave.

TREASURER'S REPORT

John Talbot gave his report.

It was all over at 9:21.

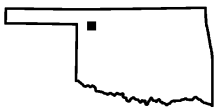
TREASURER'S REPORTS

INCOME		**EXPENSES**
DIVIDEND	$ 0.13	None
Dues	30.00	
TOTALS	**$ 30.13**	
CASH ON HAND	$ 23.04	**TOTAL FUNDS AS OF 11/6/07 $ 33,303.24**
CHECKING	$ 619.14	
SAVINGS	$ 2,661.06	

PREPARED BY TREASURER
JOHN TALBOT

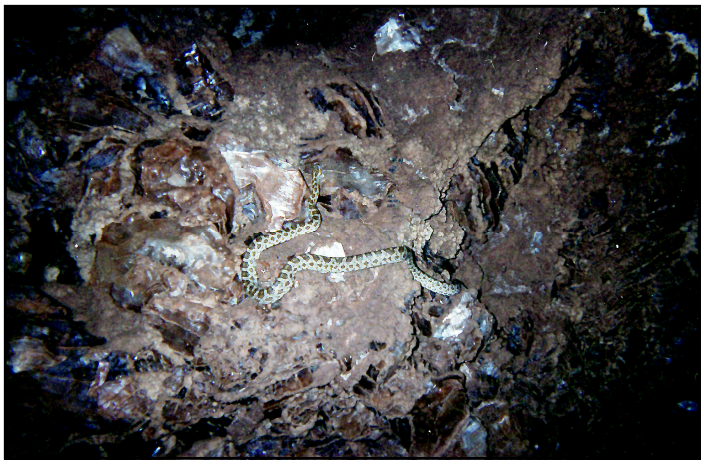
TRIP REPORTS

Trip Report: Broken Horn
Date: November 17, 2007
Personnel: John Bozeman, Sue Bozeman, Dale Amlee, and AnneAult
Written by Sue Bozeman

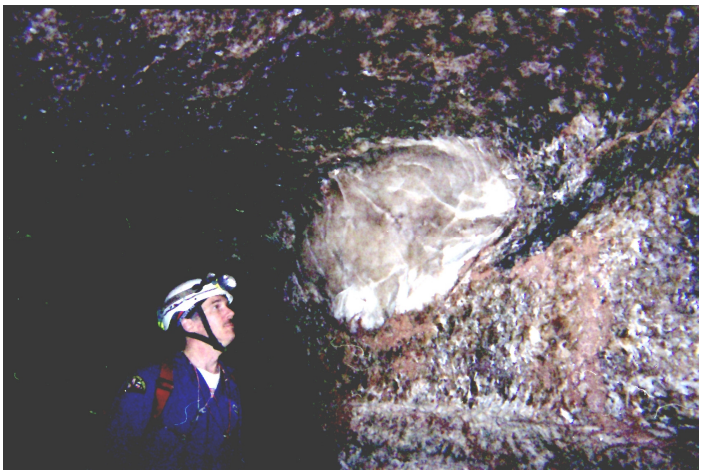


The group trudged slowly to the last survey point, looking at the points of interest as we went. We headed in a downstream direction, passing the large VW-sized crystal block trying to come down from the upper room. Our photo of it did not come out, sorry to say.

We passed a couple leopard frogs and salamanders on the mudbanks and several crayfish in the stream, which was pretty well behaved and back to its normal banks. We also passed the high cross passage that Jon Woltz had climbed one side of and Dale Amlee the other on the previous trip. This time, however, Dale said, "I think I see a snake. No. I KNOW I see a snake!"



Sure enough, a Prairie Kingsnake about 3 feet long, was hunting on the head-high rock that Dale had climbed the previous trip. Marvelous climbing control, this snake has. We wonder where it came in as it was several hundred feet from any human-sized (or yet found) entrance. We got a neat photo of it -- it posed well.



Continuing down passage we picked up the survey at E22, I think!? That was a nicely labeled nice spot in the lovely crystal area. The survey is still in large walking passage for a few shots -- and then the ceiling channel deadheads into a mud-plug! Steve, where are you and your tools??? Seriously, folks, the real original passage is there and at the top of a massive, easily dug, pile of dirt, Dale could see a little ways beyond -- who knows? Any diggers interested?

At that point, the passage makes a near-90 degree turn to the left and continues much much lower. We continued surveying until we came to a slump-split. The center of the passage has gently slumped and left a choice of ways to travel. The most direct route is the lower of the two, the crawl. We surveyed through there and dodged the bats who also found it the easiest travel route. John said, "We need a Bat Detour!

TRIP REPORTS

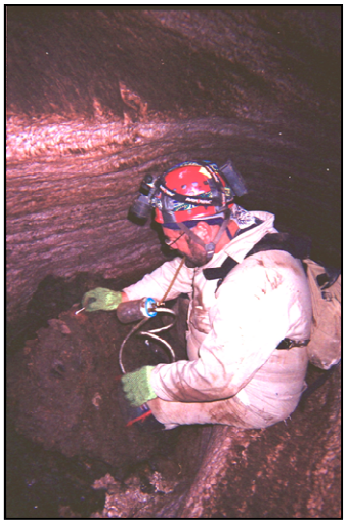
C.O.G. Cave Invertebrate Collecting
Place: Endless and Lady's Cave
Date: Sat. Nov. 3, 2007
Participants: Dale Amlee, Anne Ault, John and Sue Bozeman, Duane Del Vecchio, Jon Woltz
Trip Report by: ddv07

C.O.G. Cave Invertebrate Collecting in Central Western Oklahoma

A wonderful Saturday to go bug collecting in a cave! We had been contacted by a professor in California to help collect invertebrates in Oklahoma caves to be part of his research project about Cave Invertebrates in America. The club hadn't done any of this in years and years! We all gathered from various parts of the state at the parking lot of J.C. Cowboys in Weatherford, OK. From there just two cars were needed to take us to the caves to do the collecting. When we got near the cave area, we found an eight-foot trench where a new gas line was going across the county! BLOCKED!!! So we crossed country until we got to a good drop off place to hike to the caves. Wonderful weather (in the 70's)(and it's NOVEMBER!!!) so the hike to Endless was very pleasant!

The Bug Catching Crew except Jon who took the picture.

This part of the state had received tremendous amounts of rain in late spring and summer! So we were expecting a bit of a wet cave for Endless as it usually has a little bit of water going through it. We were noting the creek, which comes out of the cave, had debris about 12 feet high in the branches!! Oh oh... LOTS of water came though this area!!



Duane getting a specimen using a Q-Tip.

When we got to the cave Sue briefed us on how to do the collection process. Each collector was given a small (aspirin bottle size) bottle filled with isopropyl alcohol, three Q-Tips, and I got a special "bong-like" bottle in which one tube is put in the water and you suck the bug into a jar in which you have another tube in your mouth doing the inhaling... don't do it too hard or the water will arc over from the input tube and instead of going in the jar goes directly into your mouth.... Pa-tuey!! Nasty!! When one sees a bug, beetle, spider, tick, flea, fly, etc... (any invertebrate then just touch it with the Q-Tip that is saturated with alcohol. This stuns most of them long enough for you to drop them into the bottle that you are carrying that is full of alcohol. However, we found that some of those beetles seemed to actually enjoy the alcohol as they would get pretty hyper fast moving after a touch (my kind of bug!!). Not more than two of any one kind of critter should be collected.

We split into two groups, one that concentrated on the waterside of collection and the others on the walls and shelves of the cave. The cave wasn't just wet, but had an active stream moving though it!! There were indications that it had flooded all the way to the top of the cave roof. (but we figured that as the debris outside was way higher than the cave exit!)

We obtained a nice collection of critters in the three hours we spent in the cave. At the exit we each gave Sue our jar where she patiently transferred our creepy-crawlies into a nice clean alcohol container that represented that cave's critters.

We then moved to Lady's Cave - a cave of opposites. Where as Endless was wet, muddy, and sloppy, Lady's Cave was almost bone dry. Indications were that there was no floodwater that passed though here, it did have a few puddles but was dry over all. Hence, the animal life was basically non-existent. Humm...seems you need water to survive?? Imagine that!! Dale Amlee did get an enormous spider out of it which on it's own, filled his bottle. He didn't use a Q-Tip though... he had to stick the whole bottle over it! <grin> We barely were able to get anything out of the cave. I think four critters in all came out of it.

On the way back to the cars we came across two trees that had washed down during the flood with root balls intact. They were wedgied in a narrowing of the creek and stopping up the water like a beaver's dam. Dale A, Jon, and Sue spent the next 15 minutes playing monkey bouncing around on it, kicking the root ball etc…

(continued on page 5)

to try to loosen it up to let the giant pool behind it loose. Though they never did totally free it, Sue did get enough of the root ball de-mud-ified so that water started breaking through.

We finally got back to the cars and Duane received the extra bottles and 'bong' as the next weekend he was to lead the team down in SW Oklahoma in Jester Cave. (Duane's note: We're using aquarium fishnets instead of that #&^*#!!! Bong thing!!! <grin>)

On our way out we met the new landowners who Jon ended up knowing from his teaching in SWOSU. We then all went to Weatherford for some Pizza and after bug collecting comradely!

Sorry about no pictures - Dum Duane forgot!) <sigh>
Edited: Sun. Nov. 25th - BUT... John did have a camera... now we have pictures!!

Invertebrate Collection at Jester Cave
Participants: Duane Del Vecchio, John Talbot, Lil Town, Jeremiah VanDyke, John Van Dyke
Date: Saturday - November 17, 2007
Report by: ddv07

We received a contact from a professor in California that is doing a study on Cave Invertebrates of America. He needed samples from Oklahoma and asked C.O.G. to help out, so this is a bug hunting trip. We want the cricket, not the bat!

John brought his son with him and the lad did quite well in obtaining samples (as well as an education).
The Tools: aquarium nets, medical tweezers, Q-Tips, and Isopropyl Alcohol.

An invertebrate is an animal without bones. In-

sects, Arthropods, Arachnids, Centipedes, etc...A bat may have ticks, fleas, mites, or other bugs on it while it sleeps so it is worth a look. They most often have some kind of insect which is in their ears. (wax eaters? <grin>)

We saw a lot of other critters... some quite cammo'ed...

Some person (mainly yours truly) said naw...we don't need knee pads... ouch...yes we did....sigh...
A lot of water and a lot of stooping in this cave… But since it is a water cave, it has lots of life around it!

This was Lil's first cave trip in over a year...she was a happy caver!!

When we finished the south entrance we rested a moment and had a nice 1/2 mile hike to get to the cave entrance, then hike it back to the cars. But a wonderful 80 degree day (in the 3rd week of November!) made it a nice trip!

We then moved to the cars and we drove toward for the North side of the cave (where Lil watched them for us) and on to another hike as the fence was locked.

This end of the cave (Glade Entrance) is typically known for its collection of bats during the winter bat count. While the mats were not that thick, they were starting to form.

Right away we were able to get a couple of water creatures!

Though some were sleeping, the overall bat population was still active (not hibernating) as we haven't had any cold

We did get to see a Tiger Salamander(but it's a vertebrate and not to be bothered!).

Where the bats on the south side had lots of parasites, these guys (probably due to their active state) were not covered in little crawlers.

We did get a couple of bats caught in flight...always a neat picture! Many chatted at us as we rapidly went past their rooms but not many flew.
Then one by one we exited Stovepipe exit... Nice last belly crawl to get out…

We went back to the cars to sort out our critters
We transferred the critters from dirty containers to one clean one. The middle of the road made the perfect table in case one was dropped!

Now we'll ship our pickled critters off to California to be identified and be part of the Cave Life of Oklahoma. Good job gang!

POTPOURRI

Earth's inner spaces lure explorers

By David Zizzo
Staff Writer for the Daily Oklahoman
Tuesday, November 20, 2007

Since she was a little girl, Sue Bozeman has loved crawling into holes. Now retired, Bozeman's special sense of adventure has taken her to some yucky, cramped and amazing spots.

"I'll never go to the moon. I will never go to the bottom of the sea," she said. "But I have been to places people have never been before."

Many of those places are hard to reach, part of the allure for Bozeman and others who like to follow passages under the ground just to see where they go. Cavers, as the amateur speleologists call themselves, have many reasons for going down under. Bozeman's husband, John, a geologist, is interested in the science of the planet around him. "I like to know about the processes involved in our Earth," said John Bozeman, who lives in The Village with his wife.

Some do it for the solitude and absolute silence. "It's unbelievably peaceful," said Duane Del Vecchio of Lawton, another member of Central Oklahoma Grotto, a local caving club.

But mostly, cavers just want to take the road less traveled, as long as it's underground. That road can be a tough one to follow. Often snaking through small "skylight" openings or dropping into sinkholes to enter caves, cavers explore passages that can dead-end in "sumps" of water, lead nowhere or wend along for miles. Sometimes they slither through crevices so tight, they must contort their bodies and pass equipment ahead of them.

Sue and Lil in Skylight Entrance

And seldom are things as tidy in caves as they're depicted on TV or in movies. To really understand caving, as a popular caving bumper sticker explains of the environment below, "Think Mud."

Some cavers — none in Central Oklahoma Grotto — even enjoy cave diving, the dangerous practice of scuba diving through flooded underground channels. In cave diving, you face the danger of losing your bearings or getting regulators, hoses or other equipment snagged while slithering through narrow gaps, all while depending on a finite supply of air in absolute darkness.

But for most cavers, things are exciting enough with their heads above water, even in the gypsum caves prevalent in Oklahoma. Although Oklahoma has the world's largest gypsum cave open to the public (Alabaster Caverns) and the longest gypsum cave in America (Jester Cave), gypsum usually has little of the glamour of limestone caves, many of which are known for spectacular stalactite and stalagmite formations.

But gypsum can have its treasures, cavers say. And finding them — especially if you're the first to see them — is unforgettable. Sue Bozeman recalls when she and others came upon a spot that had formerly been filled with water and silt, one that became alive with crystals.

"It's just a beautiful little alcove, like a geode," she said. "It sparkles. It's just awe-inspiring. It's the jewel that you look for and very rarely find."

Serious cavers, like serious adventurers of all kinds, follow the cardinal rule of the wild: Take only pictures and leave only footprints. Central Oklahoma Grotto members also survey caves with tape measures, compasses and inclinometers, creating maps that are filed in some public libraries. However, the cavers closely guard the exact locations of caves in an effort to protect them from those with less respect for their natural beauty.

Unfortunately, cavers say, too many caves are "trashed" by people more interested in "cave partying" than exploration. Such problems — along with worries over legal liability — have led many landowners to refuse entry to caves on their land. And, in Oklahoma, nearly all of the 1,000 or so known caves are on private land. So cavers must work hard to convince landowners they will protect caves and not take excessive risks in exploring them.

For safety, conservative cavers follow the "rule of 3s" — traveling in threes, with each caver carrying three sources of light. Cavers also must be able to recognize the types of caves and conditions that could lead to flooding. Still, casual explorers who ask "how hard can it be to crawl through a hole?" have been known engage in reckless behavior, such as doing "duck-unders," which is holding your breath for short distances underwater to reach other passages.

"You would not believe what people do," Sue Bozeman said.

When done correctly, caving is a safe activity. No member of COG has ever been hurt in a cave.

"It's dangerous only to the extent that there's no guarantee that a rock will not let loose when you are under it," Bozeman said.

Once, Bozeman and other cavers were in a "solid tube" portion of a cave, when "we hear a horrible peal of rock falling in the entrance. Had anybody been in there, we'd have had massive injuries." No one was injured, and the exploration continued without a hitch, but that was little comfort to a new guy exploring with the COG group that day. "His eyes got real big," she recalled, "I've never seen him again."

So, obviously caving's not for everyone, said Del Vecchio, who used to find his solitude while freefalling during skydiving jumps. But for those who can appreciate it, nothing compares with slogging around in the Earth's innards.

"It's stimulating yet fun," he said. "When you come out, you're filthy, worn out and you have this big old stupid grin on your face."

Sue's letter of thanks to the Oklahoman

Hi David,

You did a fine job on our cave article.

I usually cringe when I see what I've said quoted. I did not, this time. You gave a fair analysis of gyp caving and our group and its efforts ... and us (John and me and DDV).

Thank you for that.

We've suffered many a reporter misquoting or unintentionally "enhancing" our words. You played it straight ... and well.

Can NOT thank you enough.

Anyone who comes to us from it comes not for the THRILL but for the experience of exploration.

Very much obliged.

Now. Request: any way to get 7 copies of the paper? Yes, we can sort of print out the online version -- it's just not as "good. " If not, so be it.

Happy Thanksgiving to you and yours.

Anytime you really want to come 'caving' and/or 'surveying' with us, let us know.

Very thankfully,
Sue and John and Duane and cavers everywhere in Oklahoma and beyond ...

Rare fruit bats used for target practice

Gunmen shoot dozens inside remote cave on Cyprus

Copied from the internet
updated 10:21 a.m. CT, Thurs., Nov. 29, 2007

NICOSIA, Cyprus - A protected colony of rare fruit bats in Cyprus has almost been wiped out by unidentified gunmen using them for target practice, conservation groups and authorities said Thursday.

Dozens of the mammals, which are under threat of extinction, were killed in a shooting spree in a fenced-off cave in the western district of Paphos. From a colony of about 60, only 10 to 15 survived, conservation experts said.

They said the shooting probably occurred Sunday, but discovered the carnage only Wednesday.

"The cave is nowhere close to a residential area so I can only assume people were doing this for kicks," said Harris Nicolaou, a conservation officer with the Cypriot forestry department.

The population of the once plentiful fruit bat has declined rapidly in the past century because of government-sanctioned extermination programs under British colonial rule before independence in 1960.

While the mammal could also be found in the Middle East, Pakistan and north India, there were a maximum of 3,500 left in Cyprus, said Nicolaou, who tracks the mammals.

'Strictly protected species'

"This is now a strictly protected species, it is the only fruit bat we have, and the only fruit bat in an EU member state," he said.

Bats are associated with superstition in other cultures but in Cyprus, they are considered more as pests that eat fruit.

"That perception is actually wrong," said Nicolaou. "It will only eat over-ripe fruit."

The cave, which once had a colony of 300 bats, has been attacked three times previously in the past four years.

"There are still those who regard bats as vermin, but these were clearly people using these creatures as target practice," said Christos Charalambous, a member of the Green party who has tracked the colony for years.

"This is part of the wealth of our biodiversity, I cannot understand why it is happening."

URL: http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/22025375/

CDC Scientists Identify Presence of Marburg Virus in African Fruit Bats

Published: August 23, 2007
Reprinted from the internet

CDC Researchers find possible animal source for Marburg virus. (Photo by WHO)

Scientists at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and their collaborators have announced that they have successfully identified the presence of Marburg virus in a common species of African fruit bat (R. aegyptiacus). The scientific publication, released on Wednesday, August 22, in the open-access journal PLoS ONE (www.plosone.org), describes an investigation in the Central African countries of Gabon and Democratic Republic of Congo.

Marburg hemorrhagic fever is a severe and highly fatal disease caused by a virus from the same family as the one that causes Ebola hemorrhagic fever. Both diseases are rare, but can cause dramatic outbreaks with high fatality. There is currently no specific treatment or vaccine.

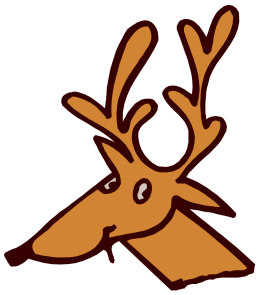
The natural reservoir for Marburg virus has been the cause of much speculation and scientific investigation. Bats have been suspected of carrying the virus, but until now, virus infection in bats had not been documented. It is also the first study to document the existence of Marburg virus in the Central African country of Gabon.

This paper coincides with an ongoing investigation of Marburg infection among miners in a lead and gold mine in Uganda. The mine, located about 300km from Uganda's capital, Kampala, provides dwelling for at least two bat species. One is the African fruit bat (R. aegyptiacus), identified in the publication as a potential Marburg carrier.

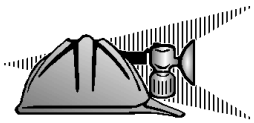
CDC deployed a six-person team to Uganda in early August to join colleagues from the National Institute of Communicable Diseases (NICD) in South Africa, and the World Health Organization, to investigate the source of the Marburg infection. The team has also been conducting studies to determine if other bat species might also carry the virus.

To learn more about Marburg virus please visit: Marburg Hemorrhagic Fever.

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!*



Remember to come to the December meeting on Friday, December 14th.



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