

CENTRAL
OKLAHOMA
GROTTO
OF THE NATIONAL
SPELEOLOGICAL SOCIETY, INC.

C.O.G.nizance

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The January meeting of the Central Oklahoma Grotto will be held at 7:30, Friday, January 14, 2004. at the home of John Talbot.



The entrance to Alabaster Caverns after the rock slide.



ANNOUNCEMENTS

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

*Southwest trips are scheduled the first Saturday of every month. Contact Lil Town for details.

*The 7:30 January meeting will be at John Talbot's house. This will be the first meeting of the new year!

MINUTES

CENTRAL OKLAHOMA GROTTO

Minutes of the November 12, 2004 meeting

Host: Anne Ault and dogs

Members present: Dale Amlee and son, Sue and John Bozeman, Duane Del Vecchio, Roy and Nicole Diehl and daughter, John Talbot, Lil and Dale Town, John Van Dyke, Steve Beleu

Chairman Diehl began the meeting at 8:34 because we were all eating the metric ton of food that Anne prepared for us as our sacred duty.

OLD BUSINESS

1. None of us looked at the "Cave-X" program that Roy told us about during last month's meeting.
2. Roy noted that he hadn't had a chance to contact any grottoes in eastern Oklahoma or western Arkansas about our rambling through Fitton Cave for our Summer 2005 Fun Cave Trip.
3. Roy noted that he also hadn't had time to work on his promised article for the *Oklahoma Underground*.
4. Duane said that he could produce a CD-ROM as an appendix to the next *Oklahoma Underground*. He noted that he couldn't estimate any costs at this time. We then had a general discussion about the proposed CD-ROM supplement, with attendees generating many good ideas for it.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Sue reported that the Green River Grotto of Bowling Green, Kentucky (whose football team OU beat 40-24 in September), which is a student grotto, wants to tour Arkansas, Missouri, and Oklahoma. They want to go to a gypsum cave in our state. She noted that perhaps only 6 out of 20 members might actually come here. We would take them through Jester Cave. She asked them if they wanted to help us with our bat count in February, but since they're university students, this is a bad time for them. So if this happens at all, we will take them through Jester in March during their spring break.
2. Anne noted that the Maverick Grotto of Texas, as is recorded in their grotto newsletter, continues to discuss the possibility of a joint trip with COG. We await their invitation.
3. Lil shared some amusing "I are a caver" e-mails with us.
4. We elected officers for 2005. The officials, as voted by us entirely via popular vote, no Electoral College here, will be as follows. May their souls rest in peace!
Chair – Roy Diehl III
Vice Chair – Jon Woltz
Treasurer – John Talbot
Secretary – Esteban Beleu

TREASURER'S REPORT

John Talbot read his report, which is included in this newsletter.

Chairman Diehl concluded the meeting at 9:31. Minutes by The Crazy Monkey this month.

TREASURER'S REPORTS

INCOME

DIVIDEND	\$ 0.08
T-Shirt Sales	\$ 20.00
TOTALS	\$ 20.08
CASH ON HAND	\$ 51.45
CHECKING	\$ 383.36
SAVINGS	\$ 2,585.92

EXPENSES

Postage	\$ 15.81
Equipment Repair	\$ 27.08
Phone calls	\$ 1.05
	\$ 43.94

PREPARED BY TREASURER
JOHN TALBOT

TOTAL FUNDS AS OF 11/3/04 \$ 3,020.73

TRIP REPORTS

Trip Report: Cattle Cave
COG Personnel: John and Sue Bozeman, Steve Beleu, Dale Amlee
Date: December 18, 2004
By Sue Bozeman

Steve Beleu, John and Sue Bozeman, Roy Diehl and Duane Del Vecchio went off to Cattle Cave's southwest entrance, Blessed Relief -- named by Nicole, who found this wonderful exit that did NOT require us to slog back down through the wall-to-wall water ford a year or so ago.

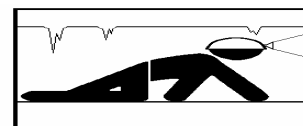
Sue, Roy and Steve were to go in Blessed Relief to the supposed connection passage that is so low and filled with mud that we'd have a 300 foot excavation ahead of us to find the exit -- which we THOUGHT we knew where was. Eek. What a sentence. Let's try this again: there are a couple of slots and sinks with water-, cricket-, Roy- and salamander-sized entrances in the vicinity of Blessed Relief. We thought (Sue thought) that they all interconnected and would feed into this low internal lead.

To prove this, we were going to let John and Duane position themselves at those holes, sniffing the exiting cave air for vanilla, which Sue/Roy/Steve were to spread around in the low lead inside. Well, Steve corked at the entrance corkscrew of Blessed Relief -- too much weight-lifting, he says. So Roy and Sue went down the

hill to fetch a pail of ... no no no ... they went on to the low lead and Roy blessed the cave rock with Watkins vanilla -- pure, can't find better, highly volatile, yummy vanilla. It is supposedly the air connector of choice in limekarst areas of the US. Well, the air was moving nicely, but we did NOT make a connection. So we still have to find out where THOSE little holes go.

Next, we looked for any other possibilities, sniffing as we went. The problem was that both Roy and Sue kept getting whiffs of each other and were basically worthless as sniffdogs. Nevertheless, Sue and Steve did go in a hole that had been explored several years back, which had been deemed too small to pursue. Sue had never been in it, so followed Steve in, who HAD been inside but basically had little memory of what it held. Well, Sue was ecstatic! It was no small dinky hole. It was not a sniglet of a stinkin passage. It was a NICE, hands-and-knees to walking huge room ... off of which went a small, dinky, stinkin' canyon slot. But it went in the right direction for connection into Cattle. AND the little cavelet was PRETTY with nice selenite crystals, to boot!

So. Guess what crew!? We got cave! And Cattle is NOT yet finished!



POTPOURRI

Rock slide closes Alabaster Caverns

Caverns closed Dec. 24, set to reopen Sunday
By Kaite Strehl
CNHI News Service

FREEDOM— A rock slide has blocked the cave entrance at Alabaster Caverns State Park. The caverns closed at 5 p.m. Sunday. The rock slide occurred over the weekend and was discovered by tour guide Britanie Welty.

"I have never seen anything like this," she said. "I never thought I would see anything like this, at the magnitude," said Tana Nixon, clerk/tour guide with the park for five years and lifetime resident of Freedom. "I haven't even heard of anything like this. I have seen dirt clogs on the walkway after a lot of rain has fallen, but nothing like this."

The slide blocking the opening of the entrance to the cave is approximately 10 feet by 60 feet wide and 8 feet tall, said Park Ranger John Gay.

"It appears that the moisture in the ground and the freezing temperatures of last week caused the rocks to loosen and fall," Gay said. Engineers and geologists have been called in to assess the damage and to devise a plan to clean up the slide and reopen the caverns.

"All cave tours have been suspended and we are not proceeding with any cleanup until or assessments are finished," said Park Manager Dean Taylor.

"Our first priority is the protection of the cavern's natural resources and the safety of our visitors and staff," said Regional Manager Bruce Divis.

Laser Lines for Cave Surveying

To: cavetex@cavetex.net

Sent: Friday, January 07, 2005 9:44 PM

Mark Passerby

About a year or so ago I tested a Checkpoint digital laser level. For replacing a traditional clino it worked excellent, but it was pricey and a bit to sen-

sitive to moisture.....plus the company went through a major restructure and may be producing them again in early 2005. Picture of Checkpoint at <http://www.cavediggers.com/checkpoint.jpg> .

Anyway we replaced the Checkpoint with a Disto/Clino setup. This setup piggybacks on the Distos laser pointer i.e. picture here <http://www.cavediggers.com/digiclo.JPG> .

In our first run out with the unit David Berman who had never used the setup ran the unit. On that particular day we checked each shot with a traditional unit and each was satisfactory. I know Martin Sluka just got one of the Smart Tool digital levels to use as well and has had great success with other digitals piggybacked with this method. Smart Tool level can be ordered at <http://www.speedpartz.com/smarttool.htm> One of Martins Units can be seen here: <http://www.cavediggers.com/LeicaMartin.jpg> Martin also uses a target which is actually crucial for getting your Disto line dead on to the survey point ! i.e. place disto on first station and target the little green LED on the target perfectly then tap the Smart Tool Digital level for a damn near perfect clino reading and a tap for the distance! A good article on this topic is at: <http://tinyurl.com/43cty>

At any rate one of my main goals with the Checkpoint was to piggyback a compass and use the laser "line" as the guide for the compass shot. With this method the compass can be put dead on the station.....then leveled with the laser line serving as the guide to locking on to the exact path between the two stations! High angle shots are of course a snap. The issue then became one of finding an inexpensive laser line level. While searching our local Walmart a few days ago I found these beauties(\$7 each) <http://www.cavediggers.com/Levels.jpg> they are 6" long and operate on 3 LR44 batteries(\$5). They shoot a powerful line i.e. <http://www.cavediggers.com/Laserline.jpg> and have an illuminated bubble level which since the compass will be mounted on the or near the back on the wide side I intend on drilling out a mount to place a level bullseye! i.e. <http://www.cavediggers.com/levelbulleye.jpg> that can piggyback on the internal light for added ease in pinpointing when the unit is level.

One of Martins Units i.e. laser line/compass can be seen here: <http://www.cavediggers.com/>

(continued on page 5)

[compasslaserMartin.jpg](#)

Note: these Walmart line levels have two powerful magnets glued inside.....simply pop the back plug out and take a sharp screwdriver to pop them out leaving only an aluminum case with 3 tiny batteries and a small laser unit at the front.

Our next mission will be to use both the Disto/Clino and Compass/Laser Line to do some in-cave loops and check the error....I will have more then. Mark Passerby, Caves.com

2004 Alpine Karst Book

E-mail From Joe Oliphant

Greetings from Montana.

Would you please put the following announcement in your next grotto newsletter and/or distribute the information to your grotto members:

The 2004 Alpine Karst book is available December 2, 2004.

Publications details:

Size: 8.5 x 11

No. of pages: 130

No. foldout maps: 3

Maps Other: 21

Color Cover

Photo images 82

Graphics (geo graphics, drawings, etc): 11

Retail Cost: \$16.00 (includes shipping)

Publisher: Cave Books

Editor: Tina Oliphant

Description:

A revival after 26 years. Alpine Karst was last published in the 1970's. Chuck Pease, Jim Chester/Ron Zuber produced four issues from 1975 to 1978. Alpine Karst focused on the unique challenges and rewards of exploring and documenting caves located in Montana, Wyoming, Idaho, Colorado, California, Utah, Canada, and Europe. It also featured articles on advanced techniques, geology, and equipment. Most alpine caves are located in wilderness areas adding interesting dimensions to the explorations and articles.

And despite the 26 year gap, some things are timeless. This issue of Alpine Karst continues the classic stories of exploration and science as one reads of groans, llamas, skis, toboggans, rafts, mountain bikes, scuba flippers, the Grizzly, and some very sore feet. And in the end, we survive to explore and document the caves. Articles of sci-

ence and exploration are included from Utah (the complete account of exploration of Nielsons Cave), California, Montana, Alaska, Colorado, Europe and Canada. Vertical techniques and new options for wetsuit technology are explored. A generous amount of photos and maps accompany the publication.

For more information go to : www.alpinekarst.org

Dead Cave

By Steve Beleu

Driving up the "Northwest Passage"
To caves beneath the gypsum hills
Only the cedar trees are green--
The harvested fields are dry, brown;
The other trees, bare branches.

Seasons come and go, hot, cold;
People come and go, happy, sad.
These caves seem always the same,
Temperatures always the same,
Growing wider and deeper,
Filling with mud and gravel,
Collapsing into breakdown.

But where there was once a cave
Now there's a shallow valley.
We stand in it and speculate--
What was it like to cave here?

GEODE

By Steve Beleu

Flat as the sky, beneath the horizon
Caves roll and tumble
360 degrees in every direction.

Cavers slide through them
Smoothly as wet mud,
Encased in scales of wet mud,

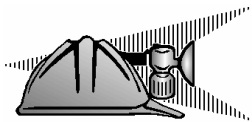
30 feet under the surface,
100 feet or 10,
Down deep pits or crawling

Beneath ceilings 1 foot high
Or 100 feet high,
Cavers deep in a geode,

A living, breathing geode.

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@cablone.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 to come to the January meeting
at the Talbot's Place, Friday, January, 14.*



Central Oklahoma Grotto
C/o 3208 Gettysburg Drive
Altus, Oklahoma 73521