

CENTRAL
OKLAHOMA
GROTTO
OF THE NATIONAL
SPELEOLOGICAL SOCIETY, INC

C.O.G.nizance

Inside this Issue

Announcements2

Minutes.....2

Murray L. Looney2

Treasurer's Report3

Trip Report3

Potpourri

Large Calcite Formation Found in N.M.Cave
reprint from Yahoo news written by Sue Major
Holmes, AP writer.....3

CavTex article about bat house in park.....4

Gypsum Caving Bagatelles-7:
music by Steve Beleu.....5

The June meeting of the Central Oklahoma Grotto will be held at 7:30, Friday, June 10, 2005 at the home of Duane Del Vecchio.



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

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.
 *Roy is in the process of making plans for an exchange fun trip with an Arkansas grotto. He will keep us informed.

*The 7:30 June meeting will be at Duane's house.
 *Roy also graduated and is now employed by the Edmond School District as a 6th grade teacher for the 2005-2006 school year! Teachers may soon outnumber librarians in COG!

MINUTES

CENTRAL OKLAHOMA GROTTTO

Minutes of the Friday the 13th, May meeting

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

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

TREASURER'S REPORTS

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		
TOTAL FUNDS AS OF	\$ 3,200.47		
5/9/05		PREPARED BY TREASURER	
		JOHN TALBOT	

TRIP REPORTS

Yes, there were cave trips, but the reports were not ready to be published at this time and will be in the next newsletter! Next month there will be a report about a Greene's Cathedral trip and a discovery of another passage as well as the cave restoration trip to Carlsbad. 

POTPOURRI

Large Calcite Formation Found in N.M. Cave

By SUE MAJOR HOLMES, Associated Press Writer

Tue May 31, 8:48 PM ET

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 southern 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.



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 neighbor-

hood 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 email. "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.

E-mail gjeffers@dallasnews.com



The Crazy Monkey Secretary wrote the following at the end of the 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 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



GYPSUM CAVING BAGATELLES – 7

Written by Steve Beleu

Piano

Moderate
MF

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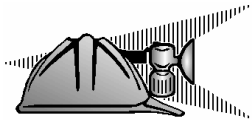
F

Accidentals in effect for measure only,
but some noted for ease of performance

Steve Beleu
November 12, 2001

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 June meeting
at Duane's house in Lawton, Oklahoma,
Friday, June 10th.*



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