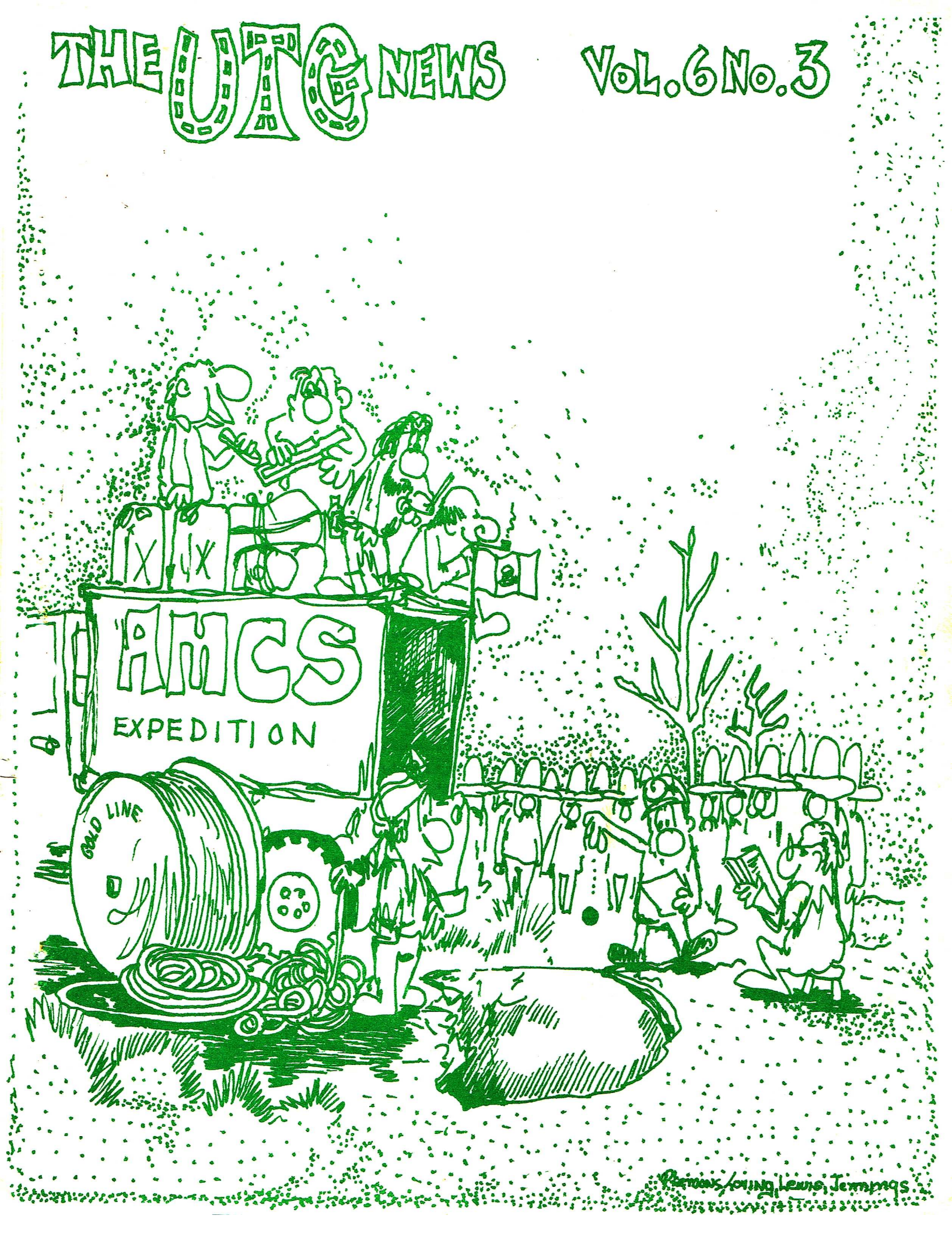
THE UTG NEWS

Vol. 6 No. 3



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ATTENTION!

The annual TSA Convention will be held in April in Georgetown, so let's put in more than token attendance this time around.

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UTG OFFICERS FOR 1969

Chairman	Jerry Broadus
Vice Chairman	Dave Honea
Secretary	Jan Knox
Treasurer	Ann Lucas
Equipment Chairman	Don Erickson
Expedition Chairman	Don Broussard
Research Chairman	Russell Harmon

CONGRATULATIONS

EDITORIAL COMMENT

(The views and ideas expressed herein are not those of the administration, club, or other responsible people)

Well, it looks like the majority of us made it into the wonderful year of 1969 and have managed to survive finals once again so it's time once again to do some for real CAVING'.

I was looking over the Fall Semester Newsletter and noticed that the majority of the trip reports submitted to the Newsletter happened to be from those people on the staff. That sure seems funny. Now I know that more people than Just the staff go caving every now and then, so a few words scribbled down on last week's Chuck Wagon napkin will do Just fine, but get those trip reports in ...or else'.

Congratulations to John Fish and Company for their success at San Agustin in establishing a new Western Hemisphere depth record...2006'.

Ah, yes, a word about cave conservation for all you forgetful people...conserve caves'.

Also a word of thanks to our outgoing slate of officers who did a real good Job this past year. Let's do our best to help the new officers to make this new year at least as successful for the club.

President	Bill Russell
Vice President	Jonathan Davis
Expedition Chairman	John Fish
Equipment Chairman	Jim Strickland
Treasurer	Jerry Broadus
Secretary	Karen Mitchell
Research Chairman	Carol Russell

One last thing. Wishing our newlyweds, John and Meri Fish a most successful caving future.

RH

[Russell Harmon]

A NEW SYSTEM OF SPELEOTHEM CLASSIFICATION

by Russell Harmon

A person venturing for the first time into the unique world which exists beneath the earth's familiar surface is at once struck by the beauty and magnificence of the ''deco- rations'* that are found lining ceilings, walls, and floors of caves.

These decorations, or speleothems, as they are better known, are usually the result of the precipitation of cal- cium carbonate from ground water solutions percolating down into a cave.

The extent of solution and precipitation of calcium carbonate is a function of interacting surface and subsur- face environmental conditions; the most important being the availability of water, the amount of carbon dioxide present in the area through which the ground water is passing, and the temperature of the area.

The deposition of speleothems occurs within a cave in four contrasting situations: from dripping water, from flowing water, from seeping water, and from standing water. It is these depositions of environment upon which this classification system is based.

Many attempts have been made to classify speleothems by almost as many criteria. Most of these attempts have not been totally successful since there have been areas of overlap where a speleothem or number of speleothems could be placed in two or more groups within the system depending upon how the speleothem itself was interpreted. Other sys- tems have avoided this problem by being both genetic and descriptive, a feature which is quite undesireable. To date the best classification systems have been provided by Moore and Nicholas (1964), Bretz (1956), and Cullingford (1963). These systems are three quite different systems based on different criteria, and although they are acceptable, they all leave something to be desired. It is the purpose of this new system to fill in some of the gaps in these other systems of classification.

Speleothems resulting from dripping water are the most familiar of all calcium carbonate cave deposits. Often massive, these speleothems are a result of deposition by precipitation of calcium carbonate from dripping water. Included in this category are soda straws, stalactites, stalagmites, and columns.

Deposits formed from seeping water are some of the most magnificent of all calcite speleothems. These depo- sits form as water begins to slowly seep from or along cracks or fractures in the cave wall or celling and calcium carbonate is precipitated from the seeping water as carbon dioxide is lost from the solution. Included in this group are draperies, shields, and helictites.

Speleothems deposited from flowing water are the most common of all cave deoosits. These deposits are formed as calcium carbonate is nrecioltated on cave walls and floors as water passes over them. Included in this category are rimstone dams, flowstone and cave coral.

Deposits formed in standing water are most interesting of all cave deposits, for it is in this environment that the best developed crystals of calcite are formed within a cave. Included in this group are shelfstone, cave ice, cave pearls, calcite bubbles, and the crystalline calcites.

It is hoped that this system will helo clarify the present confusion in the classification of speleothems.

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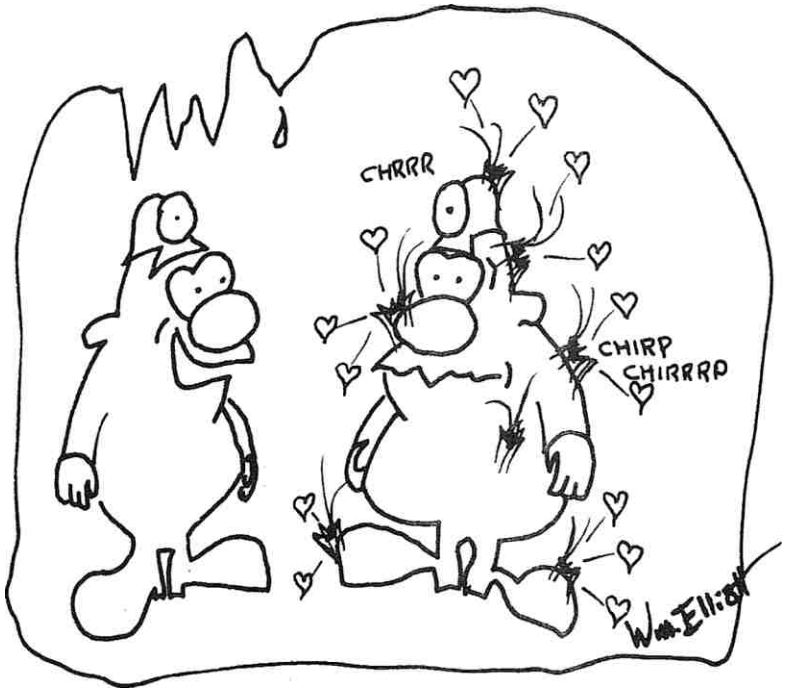


FRIENDLY LITTLE DEVILS, AREN'T THEY?

TRIP REPORTS

SAN FRANCISCO - VALLE DE LOS FANTASMAS, S.L.P., MEXICO

Date: November 27—December 1, 1968
Persons: Duane Faith and Bill Elliott (UT), Joe Sumbera, Jim Maclntire, Brian Peterson, Sharon Cathey, Martha Bult, Bill Ramsel, Keith Heuse, Sam Billings, Jim
Jarj (all Southwest Texas State cavers) y varias personas
Reported by: Bill Elliott

November 27 — Duane and Bill leave for San Antonio in the caving VW about 7:00 pm to pick up Martha and Sharon. We got to Laredo about 1:00 am and spent 2 hours waiting in line and had to fork over $ 3 to "feex" things. Drove all night trading off drivers. Nearly got lost in Monterrey amidst the fog.

November 28 — Chugging along against a headwind, uphill, we made it to S.L.P. Just in time to see a bicycle race come through from Queretaro. They were peddling like mad. We began the climb into the Sierra Madre Oriental east of S.L.P. and after reaching an altitude of 10,000 feet at the highest pass, descended into the karst area between Valle de Los Fantasmas and San Francisco, about 25 miles from S.L.P. We were due to meet two carloads of SWT cavers who had left before us. When we met up with them at a predetermined campsite we found that they had gotten several leads and even visited a couple of walk— in caves. Two or three of the group were off exploring one at that moment. Jim Jarl and I walked down to a small cave a few hundred feet from camp to do some collecting. Although the cave was only 40* long we spent about 45 minutes collecting the numerous critters while being chewed by flies and gnats. When we got back everyone had showed up so we ate a quick meal and loaded up to go further south on a dirt road to find Cueva de La Puente. However, at that moment two local men walked up and we began talking with them about pits in the area. One said he knew of one that was very deep so we followed him down to Sótano de Puerto de Los Lobos (620') which we had explored in September, only a couple of hundred yards from camp. He said he knew where Sótano de Levar was located and would take us to it. This was the sótano that another local had told us about in September that was supposed to be a 15 second drop . So we piled into our cars with Coronado and Daniel Jiménez (our new friends) and drove south for about two miles. We then followed them uphill for about 30 minutes, all the while encouraged by interesting figures Coronado kept writing for us in his little notebook (700 meters, 3000 meters, 5000 meters, etc.) They finally found us a sótano which had a large entrance but dropped less than 100 feet. This was "Sótano de Nopales." We were rather disappointed but realized we were having language and semantic difficulties with our two

friends: the slightest leading question might lead to an affirmative answer. However, they did know of another deep sótano over near Valle de Los Fantasmas and were willing to take us to it the next morning. So we took Daniel and Coronado home and camped at the foot of the hill where Nopales was located that night. The clouds come rolling up the valley late in the afternoon and inundate everything, including clothes, sleeping bags and ponchos. It would probably be easier to protect oneself from a steady drizzle. Everyone spent a soggy night.

November 29 — The next morning Brian Peterson and I went over to Valle de Los Fantasmas with Daniel and Coronado while every one else either explored and mapped Nopales and nearby small caves or scouted around. The sótano they wanted to show us was in a farmer's watermelon patch — the farmer, who was interested, came along to watch. We were rather skeptical of a really deep pit and had brought along only 80′ of rope. I tied off to a large tree and rappelled down 60′ to the top of a steep mud slope which appeared to go only another 50′ vertically. It was a rather nice large room and on the walls I saw several small salamanders like the ones I had gotten out of Lobos 2 months earlier so, collecting a few, I came out and reported to Brian that it was worth coming back and ex- ploring. The name of the pit was (mirabile dictu) "Sótano de Golondrinas". Brian had heard of "Cueva de los Caballos" being in that area so the five of us (now) got in my VW and drove up a really nice cobblestone road for about a mile west of the highway following the directions of the farmer. We pulled up at the head of a neat little valley which overlooked the plateau to the west and walked about 1500' down the valley to the large shelter-like entrance of Cueva de los Caballos. Handing out spare lights to our three companions, we explored a walking—stooping passage about 150' to its end. Nothing else led off. The entrance room (about 40' in diameter and 10′ high) had some rock corrals for keeping horses and other stock.

Walking back to the car the farmer told us there was a pit uphill a little ways. After looking down the 5' diameter entrance, we tied off the 80′ length to a large rock and Brian went down to a ledge about 70' and reported it kept going. (At Christmas Don Broussard went down this same pit about 200' and said it kept going.) Since they knew of no name for the pit I dubbed it "Sótano del Pájaro" (Brian's nickname is "Bird" and Pajáro means bird) They seemed to get a big klck out of that and called Brian "Pájaro" for awhile. Pájaro and I made it back to camp at about 1:00 and met the others. That afternoon we split into three groups: Brian, Sam, Keith, and one other went to look for Cueva de Ojo de Agua to the east; Joe, Duane, Bill and Jim McIntire went south to Cueva La Puente; and J.Jarl, Martha, Sharon and I went to map Sótano de Golondrinas. While there we found a 40' horizontal passage chock full of animalitos and collected there for about an hour. Total depth was about 120'. It was dark and misty when we got out and were lucky to find our way back to the car (we wouldn't have if we hadn't followed a fenceline) since we could see only about 10′.

Being in the clouds at night is an experience — we drove right through San Francisco without even seeing it and 15 miles later had to turn around and come back.

Brian and friends were drying out in Keith's car when we got to camp and suggested we go down the road and spend the night in a man's house who had offered same the day before. So we did. The family was extremely kind and generous, typical of most of the people in that area. Brian's group reported finding a deep pit with their guide while traipsing around that day so we resolved to go check it out the next day. Brian had already arranged for the guide to come back the next morning with his mule.

November 30 — We scrambled a dozen eggs we bought for 5 pesos and ate 2 pounds of canned bacon, then took off about 10:00. We took along the 1200' length of Samson 2—in—1 braided rope that we had brought in case of a deep pit. On reaching the pit, called "Sótano de Ojo de Agua", at about 12:00 we tossed rocks in and timed them with a stopwatch. The time was about 4 1/2 seconds so we didn't think the pit would go over 300'.However, in case of *a* second drop, we put extra rope into the pit. Using a whaletail descender, I made the first descent while Brian lowered the measuring wire with me. Depth: 232'. I called for Jim Jarl to come on down and when he got down we scampered down a slope to a sizable room with a 20' drop at its end. Sharon came down and brought with her a length of Goldline after we had shouted that there was another drop, then Martha joined us. Jim and I went on while Martha and Sharon climbed back out. I learned later that both girls climbed out in 35 to 50 minutes, which is respectable for <u>any</u> caver. Those two girls are as capable as anyone I've ever met, and they can cook too.

Jim and I mapped from the end of the lower passage (about 200' long)through 56° F. mud, then mapped on up to the entrance. Climbing back out, we found that the rope had been swinging over to a ledge and rubbing there till half of the outer sheath was worn away. We wasted no time going over the bad place. Thus,the 1200' Golondrinas rope is now doomed to be made into two ropes. We went back to the house to cook supper and await the arrival of the Cueva La Puente crew. They got there about 8:00 and had much good news: several thousand feet of stream passage, beautiful formations, high ceilings, etc. Also, a "lower" entrance (according to their guide) that was 80' high and had *a* stream carrying logs out of it. The cave drained a dolina about 1 km. across.

Satisfied with our three—day effort, we bombed back into S.L.P. for steaks and Tecate while talking over the dozen or so caves and pits we had found. Everybody started back for Texas about midnight after spending about an hour transferring lost gear from car to car to car and repacking at the main plaza in S.L.P. [missing text] but found their way back to the main route soon enough. Somewhere between Matehuala and Saltillo I realized I was going to run out of gas but made it into Saltillo on the 6 oz. of cooking stove white gas. Everybody arrived home the next afternoon.

TRIP REPORTS cont'd

BUSTAMANTE AND OTHER PLACES

Date: Assorted times during the fall semester [1968]
Persons: the 33rd street clan and various and sundry others
Reported by: Barbara Hershberger

The first trip was in September when Barbara, Eck, Hersh and seven new cavers (forgot the names) went looking for caves around Bracken, Texas. We weren't too successful but had a real good time. There are three holes too small at present to crawl through. These holes blow air out fast enough to put out a carbide lamp and rustle leaves on surrounding trees. One other cave nearby which went horizontal from a well went a short way, but was so tight only the tall and thin ones could fit through; the cave has promise.

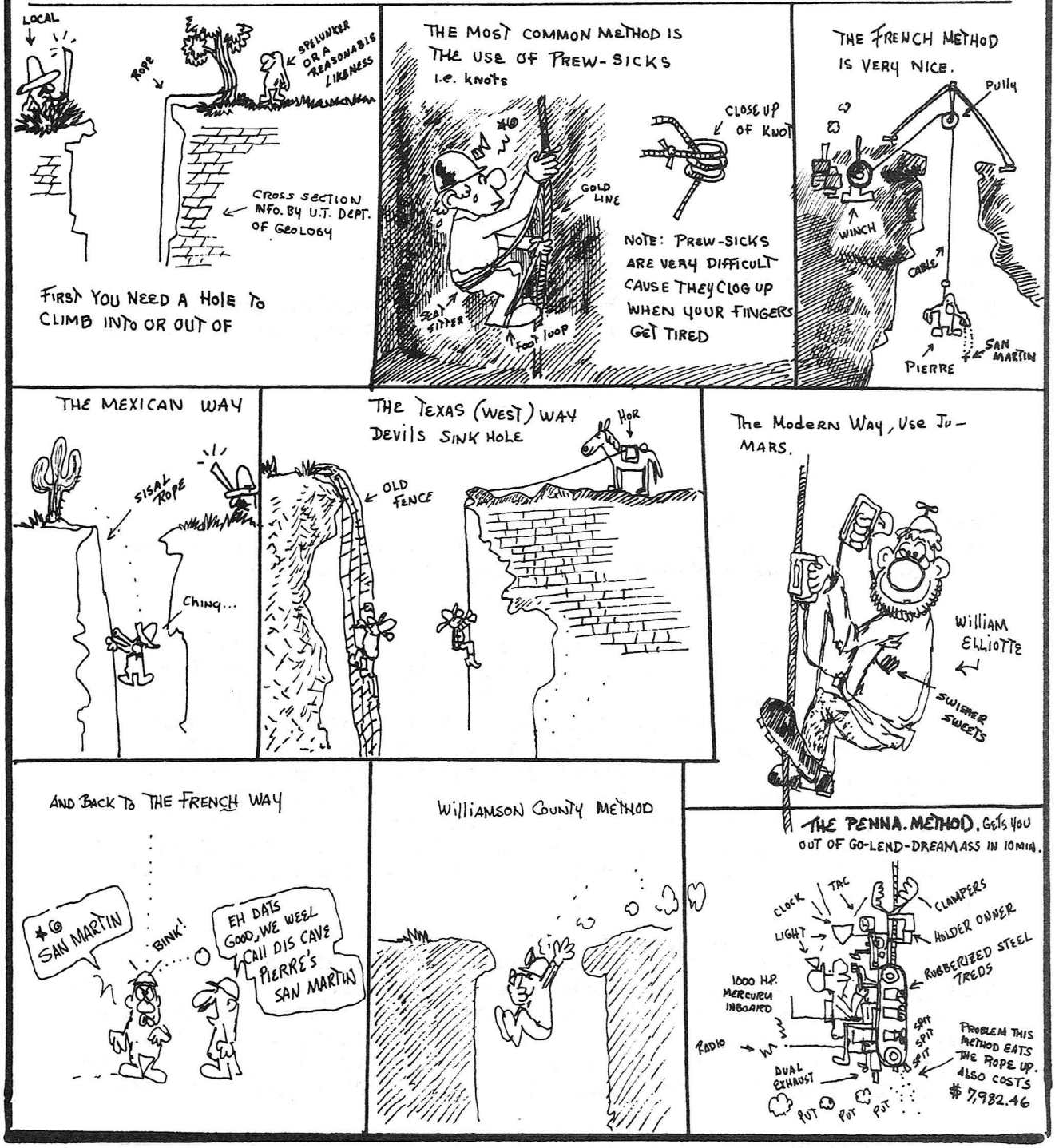
The next trip was the club Bustamante/Carrizal trip two weeks before Thanksgiving. Bob and George, anthropology students from next door, Jocie Tandy, Barbara, and Hersh went from the 33rd street clan. Did the usual thing and toured Bustamante. Afterwards we zipped over to Carrizal under the excellent navigating of Barbara (just ask Russell Harmon what there is to see in Candela) and spent the evening in the warm waters of Carrizal.

The third trip was a trip to "the Ranch" during the Thanksgiving holidays. Barbara and Hersh were the only members of the clan making this trip to the Valles area. Met some real live phosphate miner, money—lacking, pseudogeologist types near El Abra when we found Mina Florido [Cueva de la Florida?] and Cueva San Nicholas. Went on to Nacimento Rio Choy and on to the Ranch.

The last trip was a Christmas quickie back to the ole' Bustamante area. Making this trip were Jeanie, Karen, and Mrs. Lane, Bill Huey, Phil, and Barbara. This was primarily an anthropology type trip to learn about the religious rituals connected with the cave at Bustamante. We went to the canyon de Bustamante looking for the pictographs and visited the nacimento of the stream that flows through the canyon into the town. The water is about 80° — as warm as Carrizal — and ten feet deep. We then went to the cave that evening. It is not advisable for there is a packrat who delights in eating corduroy coats and high-quality backpacks (just ask Barbara and Carl Kunath). There are also animals sleeping in the cave and cougars on the mountain (one of which screamed at us as we walked rapidly down the mountain). Barbara has heard the word and believes and is afraid; and will not again enter upon the realm of he—who—has—big teeth and bad manners at night.

OLD MAN WISDOM

VOL. II NO. 2 A LOOK AT THE METHODS OF CLIMBING ROPE ©



GRUTA DEL PALMITO AND CUEVA DE CARRIZAL

Date: October 15, 16, 1968
Persons: David Honea, Don Broussard, Pam Morrison, Jerry Broadus, Shirley Dreiss, Joe Cepeda, Russell Harmon
Reported by: Russell Harmon

We departed on the annual Bustamante trip about 6 pm and crossed the border about four hours later. Arrived at Bustamante about midnight just before Barbara Hershberger and Co. Little sleep was available the rest of the night as cars and trucks continued to arrive until about 8 am.

At daybreak Jerry, David and Don began their hike up the north side of the anticline to Cabeza de León. The rest of us arose a short while later and after a quick breakfast began the hike up to the cave. The remainder of the day was spend in the lower section of the cave taking pictures with some good results.

That evening we left the three hikers on the anticline and picked up Ann, George, Bob, Barbara and Josie and proceeded to Carrizal ahead of Bob Richardson and Co., TR, and Bill Elliott. We spent the rest of the evening and half of the next day in and out of the cave departing for Austin early Sunday afternoon.

LOS SABINOS AREA

Date: Thanksgiving 1968
Persons: Jerry Broadus, Don Broussard, Joe Cepeda, Russell Harmon, David Honea, Ann Lucas, Pam Morrison
Reported by: Don Broussard (Fritz)

After a late start Tuesday night, Nov. 26, 1968, the conglomerate set off for a Thanksgiving trip to the Los Sabinos area in Harmon's truck. (At least you managed to find your purse, Pam, even if you did forget your duffle bag of clothes and caving gear). On the afternoon of Wednesday, Broadus, Broussard, and Honea surveyed 2014' more passage past the 54' drop in Grutas de Quintero. This brought the total length to somewhere around 5000 feet. A large side passage, which was not entered very far, needs to be survey- ed yet. (Hey David, why did you edit out that part about Russell and...)

As Russell was coming over the top of the short drop the locking carabiner that he was using on his swiss seat broke! The gate of the aluminum KAMET carabiner bent OUT rather than IN while the carabiner was under tension. Undoubtably this would not have occurred if it had been locked, however, it apparently came unlocked, since Russell says that he did remember to lock it. The construction of these KAMET carabiners is such that no secure flanges or protrusions hold the gate to the edge of the carabiner; only a sloping V—slot

which the gate folds into. A slight outward opening of the gate can even be noticed while only a person's weight is ap- plied to the carabiner. These carabiners were specifically designed for technical rock-climbers to be able to ooen the gate while the carabiner is under tension (i.e. supporting a person's weight). The average carabiner should not be able to be opened under tension, lock or no lock.

If you are currently using a KAMET aluminum locking carabiner, either replace it, or tightly lock it and check it often. This incident illustrates the need quite clearly.

Wednesday night was spent at Nacimiento del Río Mante, just south of Ciudad Mante. We did not enter the cave whence the water comes 'cus it was DARK! But the more timid ones wandered away from where the truck was parked and bathed while the rest just bathed.

Thursday we stopped at Cueva de El Abra where Don, David and Russell climbed the right side of the hill (looking at the entrance from the road) to rig the skylight in hopes of penduluming into a side passage high up on the wall. The trio wandered for about 3 hours trying to find the skylight but never did. David, however, found a blind pit up there about 100′ deep. Finally they entered the cave by the usual hori- zontal entrance and took a few pictures and helped Jerry and Joe roll boulders down a slope.

After visiting with about 20 other A & I and UT cavers on the main road in Valles we discovered that TR Evans' truck had to have a piston replaced. While our Thanksgiving Day turkey was being warmed up at the Los Sabinos campsite I played taxi and transferred the gear and people in TR′s truck to the campsite on the road to Sótano de la Tinaja. That was the first time I had ever seen electric lights strung up from palmetto to palmetto tree for illumination during a caving trip. I wondered where the A & I cavers' First Aid Tent and Group Hedquarters Tent were set up, but I guess they cleared a large area for them away from the road.

The turkey, which was mainly Russell's idea, was really a different caving trip meal. It was cooked (almost) before we left, so all that was done was to warm it up, warm the cornbread dressing, put the Green Goddess salad dressing on the tossed salad, and open the cranberry sauce. Thanks to our two female chefs our meal was warmed and ready to eat when I got back...

The next morning a guide, sent to us by way of a gentleman who had come by the previous day, turned out to be Agustín. This is the same person who guided Terry Raines around in the Aquismón area a year ago.

Through a picture in Bulletin One of Sótano del Arroyo, we had hoped to go to the cave and do some more mapping. After a short hike (2 miles) east of the town of Los Sabinos we came to a cave which turned out to be the hitherto misplaced Cueva de Los Sabinos. The Museum of Natural History had made a trip and made a map of it about 20 years ago, and a few

trips had been made to it for the fish, but its exact (more or less) location was not precisely known. We had a guided tour through the right-hand passage and were shown a drop before the left passage had progressed very far. The drop, about 200' to the left of the entrance, was only about 50' and against the wall. We continued through the passage a few hundred more feet and stopped when the water threatened to get our boots wet. In the passage there were a few vampire bats and a few pools of water, each of which contained several hundred blind cave fish (Anoptichthys hubbsi). No mapping was done since we were under the impression that a map already existed, but we learned later that perhaps we should have gone ahead and remapped it.

Sometime later that night Mike Collins and crew drove by on the way back from Sótano del Tigre. He said that they had rigged the first drop, but because of water trickling in at several places and the possibility of the pit flooding, they did not rig any further than the entrance drop. With this news the cramped crew in the back of Russell's truck (have you ever slept seven in the back of a pickup?) decided to go elsewhere the next morning.

Friday morning we put the wet gear back in the truck (with seven people there just ain't room for gear) and started for San Francisco. (No, no! The one between Cd. Valles and San Luis Potosí) After looking at the water falling into the entrance to Sótano de San Francisco (300', 1966, J. Fish) we asked a local store owner about caves in the area. He agreed to take-us to a ″deep″ pit north of the road a couple of kilometers. It was a nice pit but we found out later that it had been entered before by C. Jennings, J. Davis and M. MacLaughlin. The entrance drop is 275′ from a 3′ x 5′ entrance opening to a floor 20' x 35′. A 15′ drop at the side led to about 20' more of the fissure with some flowstone and formations on the breakdown. The total depth was about 300'.[Sótano de Carlos = Sótano de la Joya de los Matorrales, mapped by Harmon and Honea, Nov. 1968, 99 m deep, 1.8 km NNE of San Francisco.--Elliott, 2022]

After supper in San Luis Potosi that night we drove on to Austin by Sunday afternoon to be ready for classes the next day.

PACHUCA AND CIUDAD VALLES

Date: Semester break, January 1969
Persons: Jerry Broadus, Butch Broadus, and a friend
Reported by: Jerry Broadus

We went to Pachuca (50 miles N of Mexico City). Pachuca was a neat town with a School bus, yellow Valiants for sale, and no caves. Went to Durango — no neat cars but three pits, one a fissure which takes water which goes down a small hole. Went to Chapulhuacán — lots of holes behind people's houses, used for the town sewage system. One nice pit on the hillside. Went to Valles - went caving with Harmon. Went to Volcano — got inebriated. Went home.

The Caver meets the
Sorority Girl

1.

2.

ENCHANTED ROCK

Date: January 26, 1969
Persons: Reva and Richard Smith, Ed Alexander, Pam Morrison, Jonathan Davis, Jan O'Mara
Reported by: Jonathan Davis

We all went to Enchanted Rock to have a picnic and to climb around. In the process of so doing, we discovered (or rediscovered, I am told) several caves. Granite caves occur mainly under rocks or between them; in addition to the well-marked cave on the top of the Rock, there is a good-sized one under the huge blocks visible on the right side of the Rock, about halfway up from the picnic ground — these also are fun to climb around on. Good climbing (for Central Texas) is also to be found on the back side, where Ed made the famous Fingernail Ascent, and in the deep cracks on the northwest side, about halfway down. All this climbing is more or less "bouldering" and belay is probably not needed. Watch out for the rotten granite on exposed surfaces; it is good and hard only down in the cracks.

CAVERNS OF SONORA, CARLSBAD CAVERNS, AND WHITE SANDS

Date: January 28 — February 2, 1969
Persons: Jan O'Mara, Jonathan Davis
Reported by: Jonathan Davis

Winter is the time to make this trip, since the ordinary turisters (we not being ordinary turisters) are safely home in bed. We went through Sonora with a guide and three other people, a significant difference from the usual scene, I understand. We had never been to Sonora, and it is beautiful, but I fear that they are letting their sewage get into the cave — some of the rooms are turning black, and the smell, though slight, was suggestive — better see it while it lasts.

Carlsbad has shrunk a bit since I saw it at the age of fourteen, but you don't get the chance anywhere else to see such vastness — Bustamante is big, but it's not lit up. Duly impressed the Ranger as to my Super—Caver credentials. Only say thirty people on the tour, which usually numbers 300 or so. White Sands is blinding in January — what is it like in June? We recommend the Alamogordo Holiday Inn.

Santa Fé is COLD. The Holiday Inn there cannot compare to the Alamogordo one. And the silver costs about 12 times as much as it does in Taxco. It was foggy all across Texas to Dallas. We arrived there at 4:00 am. The technique is to get into the left lane and drive sixty so they won't run into you from behind.

BUSTAMANTE

Date : October 15 & 16 [1968]

Persons: Dennis Barrett, Heather Holden, Phil Connor, and Houston Miloy

By: Dennis Barrett

We wuz' there. . . .at the parking lot for hours. . . . . we went home. Viva Bustamante!

* * * * *

INNER SPACE CAVERNS

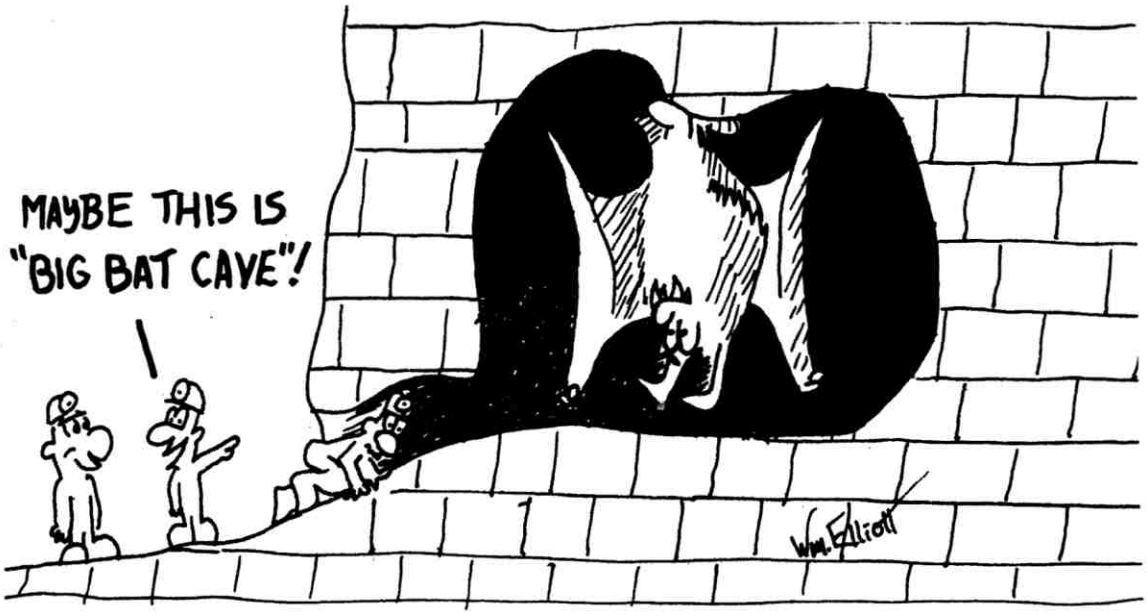
Date: Now and then

Persons: Usually Bill Elliott, Russ Harmon, Don Broussard, et. al.

By: Russ Harmon

In the past two and a half months we have visited Inner Space Caverns off and on for various and asundry reasons. We have been attempting to push the mapping a little further, collect bones, collect & study millipedes (Billiott's project), and study certain interesting speleothems in the cave (Russ Hermon's project). These trips go out to to the cave almost every weekend so if you are interested in a little easy & enjoyable work on a Saturday see Bill or Russ.

* * * * *



RETURN TO MIDNIGHT [CAVE]

Date: January 11, 1969
Persons: Orion and Jan Knox, Bill and Carol Russell, T.R. Evans, Carl Kunath, Jon Vinson, David McKenzie, Ron Bridgemon, the Air Force, and some unknowns [Bill Elliott et al.]
Reported by: Jan Knox

The abovelisted mob descended on a tiny four—room house in Carta Valley. Entering through the front window, since no one had the front door key, each group claimed a corner of the house to sleep in. T.R. slept in the bathroom, the Air Force was on the back porch, while the remainder formed a wall to wall mass of cots, sleeping bags, and blankets.

Arising early, about 8:50 am, it took us until 10 to finally get to the cave. Once inside Bill [Russell] and David started a contest to see who could collect the most bugs. While this was going on Jon, Orion and I checked out a crawlway. After much chipping and pushing and getting stuck a small room and a series of domes was added to the total passage. The small passage was named Little Sandy due to a pile of rock dust in one room. After lunch we found Bill and it was onward to the crawlway and the passage found on the previous trip. The survey was completed in the main passages and several leads were checked. No new passage was found in this part of the cave.

While some of the cavers went to Del Rio and across the border, the remainder watched slides. The next morning Bill, Carol, Orion and I went to Amistad Dam and then back to Austin.

TINAJA

Date: Thanksgiving 1968
Persons: T.R. Evans, Janie Calvert, Hank Shields, Reva Smith, Richard M. Smith
Reported by: Richard M. Smith

Janie, Reva and I left Austin on Wednesday afternoon in pursuit of high adventure in the depths of Mexico. With only a moderate amount of alcohol consumption, we arrived at T.R.'s apartment in Laredo about 3 1/2 hours later.

After getting loaded, (T.R.'s truck and ourselves) all of our previous misgivings concerning the trip were complete ly reinforced by the gross amount of Junk in T.R.'s truck that we would have to sleep, eat, and ride on for the next five days. However, with our usual devil-may-care attitudes, we piled into the truck and headed for the border crossing. Shortly thereafter, we were speeding south, congratulating ourselves on the relatively uneventful border crossing and also, on the ease with which we had had finding an open beer store at that time of the morning.

Lady Luck fell out of the truck when I started to drive. We ran out of gas seven miles from Victoria at 5:JO in the morning. Fortunately, the situation was quickly alleviated by a rich Mexican with a full gas tank and a long siphon hose.

We then drove on towards our goal near Ciudad Valles. As we approached the end of the first leg of our journey, the trip degenerated into long periods of silence in which the primary concern of each individual was rapt contemplation of the "funny" noises coming from the engine. Our suspicions were confirmed by a Valles mechanic. He said he could fix the hole in our piston, if we left the truck with him and his cohorts until Saturday. So we left the truck to its fate and proceeded to the nearest bar in order to decide ours.

Lo and behold, who should we bump into but Mike Collins and company. After some minor browbeating, he gladly volunteered to ferry us and a small portion of our belongings to the camp grounds near Tinaja. So, in due course of time, we reeled back to the mechanic shop to repossess some of our goods.

In no less than 10 minutes, we were surrounded by 90% of the enrollment of Texas A & I. Russell Harmon and crew were only 10 minutes behind them, which proves cavers relate to broken vehicles much like bugs to bright lights. Since Russell had the most room, he "volunteered" to shuttle us to Tinaja. We made it by dark and then bedded down for the night.

One interesting feature of our trip was the never-ceas-ing drizzle to which we all became accustomed. I was lucky, since I only had to accustom myself to 2 inches of water in my sleeping bag when I awoke the next morning. Finally, after putting on our least wet clothes, we headed for the cave entrance, which is situated at the end of *a* 100 yard long ravine heavily overgrown with various types of thorny foliage. It had been previously decided that T.R., Gil Ediger of Texas A & I and I would map a small muddy passageway discovered on an earlier trip. We went down the main passageway with post-haste speed and reached the 30' cable ladder drop only to discover much to our chagrin that the cave suffered from condition of overcrowding at this point. Half of Texas A & I were at the bottom of the drop and the rest were building up their nerve for the descent. We quickly passed them and continued on toward the 60′ drop. We re—rigged a Texas A & I rope at the 60′ pit, rappelled down and met Gil at the bottom to begin mapping. After slopping around for 4 or 5 hours and getting only about 750′ of passageway mapped, T.R. and I decided to begin our trek out of the cave. One hour and 45 minutes later, we were relaxing on our wet sleeping bags.

That evening we stayed in a hotel, because we were tired of wet sleeping bags, wet clothes wet food and wet etc. The shower at the hotel was bliss even if the water wasn't warm and didn't flow over one gallon per hour. Early next morning (about 10 o'clock) T.R. and Gil went back to the cave to retrieve some mapping equipment we had left. Hank went shopping and Reva, Janie and I drank beer until the truck was ready

about 5 o'clock in the evening. We then drove in our truck with the almost new engine to Tinaja. We met T.R. and Gil, piled the truck high with wet belongings and sped to town to begin a little serious eating and drinking.

The trip back was rather uneventful, except when I hit the rear of a rich Mexican's car and we spent nine hours look- ing for an insurance adjustor. Janie, Reva and I returned to Austin at 6 o'clock Monday morning.

GYPSUM QUARRY, ENCHANTED ROCK, INNER SPACE

Date: December 14, 1969
Persons: Dr. Ernest Lundellus, A. Richard Smith, Barry Beck, Franz—Dieter Miotke,Jim Quinlan, Will White, John Fish, Bill Russell, Carol Russell
Reported by: Carol Russell

The purpose of this all—day field trip was to show local geology of speleological interest to visitors William B. White, professor of geochemistry at Penn State, Franz-Dieter Miotke, postdoctoral fellow in geology from Germany working under Jim Quinlan, and Barry Beck, geology graduate student from Rice University in Houston. The group left the Texas Memorial Museum parking lot at about 8 am in a Geology Dept, carryall checked out by Dr. Lundelius, the club sponsor.

We drove to Fredericksburg, stopped for coffee, and went out to a pit in gypsum on the Kirschberg Ranch where the owner has been mining, exposing a layer of gypsum which can be correlated over 2 miles to a gypsum quarry. Jim Quinlan pointed out stages of weathering and the group collected samples while Bill Russell checked out a nearby cave. It was about 30' long and already in the TSS files. We then drove to the quarry, and visited Gypsum Bassoon Cave, discovered by Jim Quinlan and named after peculiar solution fluting/tubes in the walls. The cave was formed in a collapse area and quarrying has made it further unstable. It consists of one large room about 20' by 15' at the largest, with total length about 40'. The fluting/tube phenomenon was also visible in gypsum blocks lying out on the quarry floor. The tubes looked very much like shot holes drilled for dynamite or core holes which merged occasionally, frequently ending in a horizontal disk—shaped enlargement.

We also visited Gypsum Crystal Cave at the opposite end of the quarry. It was almost completely crystal—filled, with a 40' crawl over a floor of fine white granular crystals, about the texture of sugar, and cool like snow. The ceiling and walls were almost solidly sugary formations, and crumbled easily. The formations were close—packed vertical needles of gypsum, faintly banded with clay impurities, increasing in size near the end of the crawl, which opened into a flat, roughly circular room about 10' in diameter with no forma—

tions. Franz—Dieter photographed one of the larger crystal masses, about a foot high. Opinions differed in the group as to whether the: delicate crystals replaced rock in the layer that became the cave, or formed in a void. This cave and Gypsum Bassoon Cave are no longer open to cavers.

We returned to Fredericksburg and drove to Enchanted Rock, eating lunches we had packed en route. On the summit of the rock the group split up to check out caves and walk over the face. Franz—Dieter took many pictures. John, A. Richard, Bill, and Barry went down the west side to Enchan- ted Rock Cave, and found several others further down. Quin- lan, Will White, Franz—Dieter, and I descended the opposite side (more or less) and found a cave in the boulders about 40' long, made slick with the oil from countless hands of explorers. Dr. Lundelius walked over the top of the rock and rejoined the others on the way down. We drove back, reaching Austin about 6 pm.

In Austin we left Dr. Lundelius, who had a dinner engagement, and John Fish. A. Richard drove the carryall to Inner Space. It was dark when we reached the parking lot, and the manager, Mr. Clawson, had left. We went to his house in Georgetown, interrupting his meal to introduce everyone. He kindly took us over to the cave, opened up, and fed us coffee. We followed the commercial trail through the cave. The visitors were especially interested in the trunk channel develonment of the cave, unusual in Texas, and the current scallops in the ceiling at the end of the Outer Cathedral. Bill, a former Inner Space guide, ran the lights and audio effects. We emerged from the cave about 10 pm. Franz—Dieter remarked on the stamina of the Ameri- cans, who, he said, "go and go and never stop to eat a meal." He said he could never live that way, since he liked to enjoy leisurely meals. We drove back to Austin and a late supper.

VALLE DE LOS FANTASMAS AND VALLES AREA

Date: January 28, 1969 — February 2, 1969
Persons: Miles Abernathy, Joe Cepeda, Bill Elliott, Russ Harmon, Dave Honea, Jerry Johnson, Ann Lucas Reported by: Ann Lucas

Following registration Tuesday morning, the above persons left Austin at noon and arrived in Laredo about dusk. Despite small complications with the Mexican border officials and a few Harmon flat tires, our first destination, southwest of the Valle de Los Fantasmas between San Francisco and San Luis Potosí, was reached in time to get a little sleep. Later that morning, several pits were located and checked out. Russell, Joe, Miles and Ann converged upon 125′ deep Sótano de Araña while David and Bill descended into 200′ deep Sótano de Pajaro which they carefully mapped. In this particular pit a various assortment of spiders,crickets, beetles, and two beautiful turquoise lizards were

collected. A couple of natives led us to several other promising locations within a very short range. David checked out a pit with a very small entrance which was a real grode hole but went to a depth of 110′. Later that afternoon, Bill, David, Ann and Jerry went to another pit where Jerry plunged down to the depth of 45' and also collected some crickets for Bill.

Thursday while Russell and Joe hiked about the countryside looking for sótanos and recording the geology of the area, the rest trekked over to a pit located by the natives the day before. Miles, Bill, David and Ann rappelled down to collect 5 adult tiger salamanders and one Pseudeurycea. The pit had a window in the side where another drop was found to abruptly end in a small crawlway. The total depth was about 100'. Miles and Ann prusicked out ahead of David and Bill, who were mapping, to discover just over a knoll two more pits. Nevertheless, lack of time prevented our exploring all the leads.

Later that afternoon, after driving to San Francisco, David and Bill investigated a fissure—like pit (the writer is not sure of terminology) which wa′ a short hike from the village. They dropped down about 150′ to be prevented from continuing by a deep pool of water. However, a 30′ by 8' passageway filled with water extended out of sight.

Regretfully, the group abandoned the beautiful San Francisco area to arrive in Valles about midnight. The original purpose was to complete the map of Cueva de los Sabinos. But these plans were soon to be relinquished. Friday morning in the Condesa (Chuckwagon Mexican style) Bill Russell suggested that we go to Sótano de Yerbaniz which is on the left hand side of the road between the San Ricardo airstrip and Los Sabinos. His description of just part of Yerbaniz sounded much more enticing than Los Sabinos. Thus, the group minus Jerry Johnson and Bill Elliott plus Jerry Broadus and a Tech caver [Tony Mollhagen?] made it to and down the impressive foreboding entrance of 250'. After chimneying up a short passage the group was awed by a large room containing about five drops—two with water, two who knows? and one flowstone drop about 50' to 60′ which was descended into. Met with a maze of passageways extending in all directions one was chosen. This low ceilinged water scoured passage about 10' wide and 150' long led to a dome room with another 60' drop. At the base of this drop was a large room approximately 350' long, 150' wide, and 45' high. The room terminated in a siphon where blind fish were collected. Obviously, this cave is quite promising and the group disliked leaving. However, the hour was growing late and hiking through the jungle along a slippery arroyo at night was not appealing—at least to the writer. After reuniting the group in Valles, the night was spent at the Nacimiento del Rio Mante. (Editor's note: Meanwhile, Bill Elliott went with Dr. Bob Mitchell [and Dr. Francis Rose] of Texas Tech to collect blind fish in Sótano de Palma Seca and Sótano de las Piedras, newly discovered a couple of days earlier by airplane by Bill Russell and friends. The two caves are near León García, between Valles and Sótano de Montecillos, now known as Sótano de Pichijumo.)

Following a leisurely swim Saturday morning and a divertissement of refreshment on the square at Mante, we drove to Austin, arriving Sunday morning.

REVELATIONS FROM A 'NEW CAVER"

It was perhaps by accident that I stumbled on the U.T. Grotto, but the damage is done—I'm hooked on the cavers, caving, and caves. However, I found out and am still find- ing out many things which were not anticipated. When first being semi—associated with the club, I say semi—associated because new cavers can never be fully involved until, well ...they're no longer new cavers, I was made aware of the several distinct types of cavers which are as follows: old hard core, gung—ho, intellectually oriented (i.e. geologists, paleontologists, zoologists, etc.), travelers and joy seekers who groove on all the trips to Mexico, and then there's the new caver. These categories are not altogether exclusive because I have met gung—ho fanatics who were geologists or zoologists, and most of the hard core do enjoy traveling about. But generally speaking the caste system of the caver social hierarchy remains rigid.

In regards to caving, my first trip was characterized by the usual happenings. First of all, there was a big has- sle over which close cave we should go to. We ended trudg- ing through waist—high weeds looking hopelessly for Lost Gold Cave which is, by the way, appropriately named. Still optimistic, we headed for Benzell's Wind Tunnel where I was properly initiated to crawlways. I had some preconceived notions about scrounging around in small passageways, but 8 inches small!!?

Another traumatic experience was in connection with learning to prusick and rappell. A very nice "gung—ho" caver was teaching me—everything under control—until one of my pigtails got caught in the rope. Hanging literally by a hair three—fourths of the way down, I waited frantical- ly for my nice instructor to get me down with or without half my hair.

Eagerly I awaited my first trip to Mexico only to learn several lessons:

a) It is no place for people with a cleanliness fetish.
b) If one has a phobia over bats, again he's in bad shape.
c) You starve—if you can't eat the picante Mexican food
d) If you are young and what's worse look young, it's a hassle to get across the border

However, all is not hopeless. There is nothing about caving that a little practice, determination, psychotherapy, and a good grin and bear it attitude can't fix. So all you gung- ho and hard core cavers give us new people a chance...

[MISSING INSERT.....]

[RELEASE AND WAIVER FORM FOR DEVIL'S SINKHOLE]

ON LOCATION AT
SCHOLTZ'

OLD CAVER FOLKSONG, OR INDIAN CREEK CAVE BOATING SONG

O Indian Creek, I long to hear you,
Look away, you rolling river—
O Indian Creek, I long to hear you
Away, we're bound away
Across the Water Passage

O Indian Creek, I love your water
Look away, you rolling river
It fills the cave just as it oughter
Away, we're bound away
A—poling down the passage

My Lady Love, she stands surveying
Far across the water passage
Up to her neck, she stands surveying
Away, we're bound away
A—paddling down the passage

The caver loved Fred Mason's daughter
Look away, your light is blinding
He took her rafting o'er the water
Away, we're bound away
Across the Water Passage

He courted her with phrases flow'ry
Look away, we'll run aground
He hoped the cave would be the dowry
Away, we're bound away
A—rafting down the passage

Fred Mason's daughter loved the caver
Look away, you rolling mudbanks
But wed a rancher who was safer
Away, it's lost forever—
We're floating down the passage

We're pushing on—the raft is breaking
Gonna cross the Water Passage
Gonna climb to Evans' Heavens
Away, we're bound away
Across the muddy water

—collected from unreliable sources by Carol Russell

A CAVER'S OWN FAIRY TALE

There once was an industrious caver who narrated this tale to me. He was the type that went caving every weekend, holiday season, and assorted other times. This particular caver's name was Stine. Stine went caving sometimes to help train new cavers, sometimes to locate the small—type cave that no one else wanted to go to, and sometimes to map and explore caves with lots and lots of passage, even if it was only as high as his hand-held Sunto, but most of the time Stine went caving to find beautifully decorated cave passage

that no one else had ever been to before. This was his life- long dream. Helictite pictures and gypsum extrusion pictures lined his walls, even above the kitchen sink! Pictures of pure white flowstone and super—long soda straws were strewn everywhere. Columns of all sizes and colors and shapes de- lighted him. Stine could gaze for hours and hours at a pic- ture of a perfectly spherical cave pearl or go into raptures of delight at a picture of cave ice or moonmilk.

So, you see, Stine was a rather average caver. He took pictures whenever possible, rarely took biological specimens unless they were abslutely necessary for Identification, and kept looking for a really beautiful virgin cave.

One day Stine heard of a proposed trip to really llmeston— ey country. The others planned to visit a well-known cave in the area, but Stine thought that this was a waste of time and why did they not look for more caves in the general area? But no, they wanted to stumble around in the cave that they already knew of. So Stine decided to go alone and explore the countryside above the cave.

He carefully packed all that he thought he might need for a long walk. Plenty of water in jugs, lots of food, and many packets of Gorilla Milk were packed. His most reliable carbide lamp was used, and lots of carbide was carried. This was go- ing to be a trip to end all trips. Stine read all the latest publications on the long drive down to put himself in the right frame of mind.

The next morning as the other cavers were starting along the well-marked, easy path to the cave, Stine started hauling it up a nearby promising mountain. The travel was slow going because of all the difficulties. Trails seemed to go nowhere except through thick bunches of cactus of all shapes and des- criptions. It was the wrong time of year for good juicy cac- tus pears. It was the wrong time of year for anything except rain! It was the wrong time of year, really, for a stroll up the mountain. But Stine kept going because, well, hum, just because.

In a particularly promising limestoney landscape Stine saw a rather barren stretch of land. No cactus! A quick scramble and up there he was. And Lo! A gaping hole, big as a dolina, and not a bottom in sight! This started the old adrenaline going, and soon Stine had his trusty 200 meter length of hard lay, 7/16" diameter Goldstring tied off to several nearby lechuguilla plants.

The odor coming from the entrance almost made our hardy hero hang back 'n barf, "but perhaps it's only very old (or very young) vampire bat guano, so there is nothing to be afraid of, Stine said very loudly to himself and Jumped over the edge. After untangling his brakebars from the snarl of 100 meters of rope on the bottom, Stine started down the 20 meter high passage trending N by NW into the core of the mountain. Small dripstone formations started appearing, and then larger formations, and bigger, and whiter, and pretty soon the formations were all over the place! Huge columns reached from the ceiling to the floor, and his light could scarcely reach the

top. Pure, white, untouched calcite formed most of the formations. Even the walls were clean limestone. The stalagmites and stalactites were a photographer's dream. If not pure white or translucent, then banded with reds, browns, burnt oranges, and even blues, which made fine color slides.

The small side passages did not interest Stine at first, for the size and splendor of the main passage captured his attention. But after entering one side passage, he found meters and meters of Angel hair curled on the floor, and in another side passage he found gypsum needles so long that long spaghetti looked short in comparison. Stine went wild! He started going at random down every passage he could find. Big passage, small passage, huge formations, small formations, nothing escaped his gaze. Of course he wasn't really sure just where he was, but that did not really matter. This beautiful, never before trod by another caver cave was just too much. Stine just wandered and looked and wished he had brought more film.

As he was strolling down a particularly big and magnificent passage he heard a low airMnoving type noise that he thought must be another entrance farther on down the passage. As he progressed on down the passage he felt sorry that the cave was ending so soon. Since his carbide lamp could only illuminate *a* limited area, Stine came upon the formation quite suddenly. Brother, it was the biggest Grand Mama Stalagmite he had ever seen. He moved nearer to try to see the top, and saw It'. It was a Worm (Wormalus Itus). The steam from its nostrils explained the noise Stine was hearing. Its tall drooped down the side of the stalagmite like a felled redwood tree. The Worm's teeth reminded Stine of La Silleta. The eyes were like...but about this time Stine started vacating the area. Nurdoo and Zephlin would have been jealous of the way Stine rapidly travelled while map- ping. (He couldn't leave without mapping so that he could find his way back later)

The Worm's breath was rapidly melting the carabiners on his belt, and the molten aluminum running down his leg suggested to him that perhaps mapping wasn't quite as important as being able to return later, since the hungry Worm was able to move rather rapidly also. Stine kept running and running, looking for a place to hide. He realized that the size of the Worm would prevent its going into any small passages, but the walls at this point were all rather smooth and offered no protection for Stine.

After a few days of this Stine realized that the situation was getting desperate. If he did not rest soon he might trip or stumble and the Worm would be upon him. But finally he saw a niche in the wall and he dashed into it. It was not quite large enough for the Worm, so Stine was able to rest and plan his next move.

Do you know what the moral of this story is? A niche in time saves Stine.

DEVIL'S SINKHOLE - PLANNING TO GO?

[William R. Elliott]

Once again we are nearing that time of year when the an- nual Devil's Sinkhole trip is upon us. For all you new folks who have never been there, and all you old cavers who are ignorant, I thought it would be fitting to recount what is known about the 'Hole to some extent and also make a few comments and suggestions on past and future activities there.

The Devil's Sinkhole is located in Edwards County on the ranch of Mr. Clarence V. Whitworth (about 200 miles west of Austin) near the town of Rocksprings. The best way to get there is through Kerrville. Traditionally most people leave for the Sinkhole on Friday night or early Saturday morning, camp at a roadside park a few miles east of the ranch, then drive to the ranch en masse at a predetermined time Saturday morning. This way the Whitworths are not annoyed with cars coming and going all day by their house, throwing up dust, making noise, and wearing out the gates (a note here: the gates may wear you out if you're not careful. They are bump-gates, hinged to a post in the middle and spring-loaded. To get through one properly, drive up to the gate, address it with your bumper, then push ahead with a smooth surge of nower. DO NOT STOP TILL YOU ARE ALL THE WAY THROUGH, or you'll wind up with the gate clobbering you in the front, rear, and about the doors and fenders as I witnessed a red Comet last year).
When you reach the ranchhouse, everyone should stop and present a standardized, notarized, gen—yoo-wine "release form" signed by your parents if you're under 21. This document is simply a legal statement that you are releasing the owners from any liability for what may happen to your young body while on the ranch. If you don't have one of these (properly filled out),tough. You can't stay on the ranch, much less go on out to the Sinkhole. Mr. Whitworth has graciously allowed us cavers to come out to his ranch every year even though a Boy Scout was killed in the Sinkhole back in 1960; he has a right to ask for this one slip of paper. We have printed the standard release form in this issue [p. 28]so that everyone will be sure to have it. Get it notarized now.
Also, while on the ranch, please, no alcohol or firearms. Double please.

Driving from the ranch house out to the pit is hard on tires and cars. Try to go in a truck or other high-sitting vehicle; if you don't have good tires, you will have a flat.

Looking down into the Devil's Sinkhole is quite an exper- ience. It's all right to look all you want but please remember this: ALWAYS lie flat on your stomach when looking down *a* pit like this. Before you get to the edge, get down on all fours, creep slowly, and then lie flat. There's always the chance that you'll lose your balance or accidentally bump each other and fall in, and once you're gone, you're really gone. Also, keep your distance from others while looking down. I've seen people so enthralled with the sight of this big pit that they kind of reeled around and didn't watch what they were doing.

As long as we're having a harangue here about what to do and what not to do, I'd like to make some comments about act- ivities in and around the Sinkhole. It has been the custom in the past to sort of let everything hang loose as far as supervision was concerned. Last year two or three other groups besides ours were at the Sinkhole and thus too many people to keep an eye on what was going on at all times.
There was no designated trio leader or supervisor to be in charge of things. As a result people were popping in and out of the hole all day long. This is OK except a few of these people were new cavers who needed training, but not there!
One time one of the more experienced cavers stopped someone just before they rappelled over the edge to check equipment.
It was related to me later that he discovered that the person had attached his brake bars to the rope backward and to dem- onstrate this to the novice, the old caver took hold of the rope on either side of the carabiners and yanked. The brake bars opened with a resounding "ping"! (Quoth he, "Wal, I'll be ding-donged!") Several new people were seen rappelling on seat slings much too large. In fact, I was standing at the bottom and looked up just in time to see some guy (I never did learn his name) rappelling to the bottom HANGING BY HIS KNEES UPSIDE DOWN FROM HIS SEAT SLING! It was so big that he had slipped out of it; needless to say he was rather shaky when he got up...first time I had ever seen someone rappel and reach bottom with his hard hat first. Another incident: a nurd, not one of our group, had rappelled down on one of the ropes which was actually two ropes tied together and thus had a knot in the middle of it. His purpose was to practice going over a knot. One problem: he had brought only one as- cender, the one for the foot. Nurd proceeds to stand on foot ascender and attach his carabiners below the knot while grip- ping the rope above the knot with his TEETH! I know this hap- pened because I heard this guy proudly relate his feat to his friends when he got to the bottom. Another incident: This one I witnessed myself: person arrives on top attached to the parachute harness by his seat sling and scares hell out of everybody who thought he had come out of the harness. When riding the harness, one should actually be in it with all three snaps connected—the speed with which the hoist travels is enough to cause one to flip upside down if attached only by a seat sling. I also witnessed the A & I gang get kicks out of getting the driver to whose car the hoist rope is attached to give unpredicted joyrides; in other words, they'd pull someone up real fast and thus make the rope spin hard, which can cause a person to get sick or simply scare hell out of him, which is not one of the main goals of caving.

Enough, enough! Instead of going on like this I'll give here some dead serious suggestions which I'd like to see ef- fected on this year's trip.

1. Let there be a sinkhole area supervisor who is elec- ted or designated to be, with the help of at least 2 or 3 as- sistants, in charge of all activities within 100' of the en- trance. He would be present at the entrance area at all times. Anyone wanting to go down the hole would have to ask

his permission and have his equipment checked before being allowed to go over the edge. Walkie-talkie communication should be kept with a supervisor stationed on the bottom at all times.

2. A flag, or better yet, walkie-talkie, should be used to keep the hoist driver in communication at all times. There was a lot of swearing last year because the hoist driver didn't know what was going on and pulled people up too fast, pulled them up too high, or bounced them off the bottom—this is unnecessary.

3. Each hard hat must have a good chin strap that is worn tightly when going down. This should be checked by the assistants also. Several people were nearly clobbered last year when a hard hat came off en route and bounced all over the bottom (not to mention the carbide light).

4. I know this will draw some cries of derision, surprisingly, from old cavers, but ALL rappel ropes should be belayed by persons on the bottom! This does not seem to bother new cavers at all, but have you ever tried tobelay a rope an old caver was rappelling on? He'll scream at you and perhaps even call you a few names. Old cavers are so used to rappelling on a free rope that they can't stand it any other way. The belayer should be careful to merely hold the rope lightly and not apply tension, just be ready to pull if the rappeller gets out of control. Perhaps if the old caver is really paranoid about someone holding the rope, the belayer should just stand by and be ready to grab the rope. At any rate, each time a rappel is made, a designated belayer should be at that rope, ready. It could, after all, mean someone's life some day.

5. Speed—rappelling should be prohibited! This is one of the reasons old cavers hate belayers, they like to zip down the rope, dust flying off the strands, and then cut-off about 20' off the floor. Admittedly, this is fun. I don't really care whether these people want to die or not, but speed rappelling is damaging to the rope. It makes newer, more inexperienced people want to do it too. New cavers are told not to rappel more than 40'/minute, why don't old cavers quit be- ing hypocrites?

6. And furthermore ...YYYAAAAAAAAAAANNNNHH!!

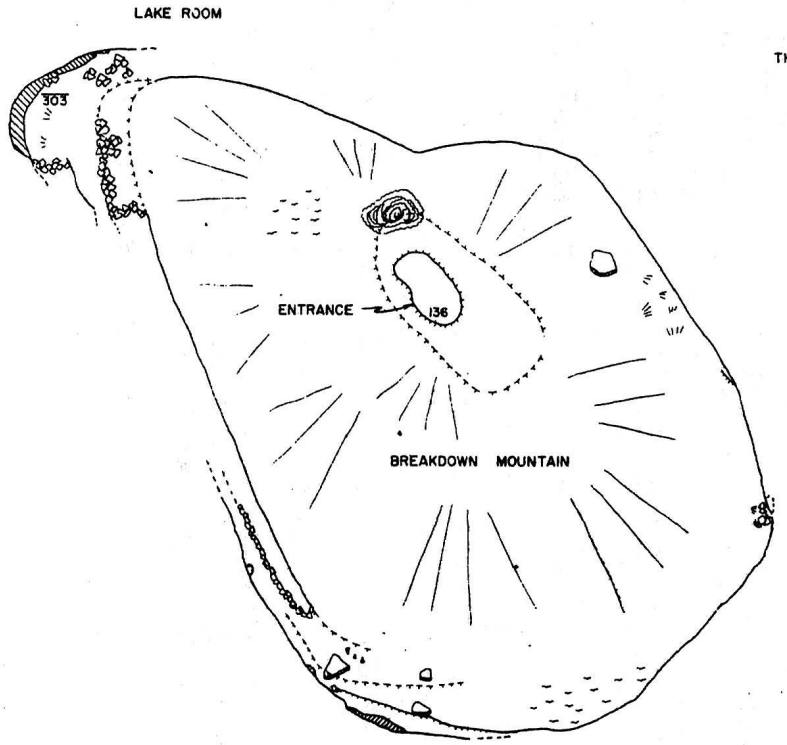
Before the offendees of this diatribe turn to the funnies in disgust, I will present here some excerpts of the Texas Speleological Survey's description of the Devil's Sinkhole (with map) for your edification and enjoyment.

"Description: the entrance to the cave is located on top of a relatively flat ridge. The entrance is about 60' in diameter and drops vertically on all sides for about 140'. After a few feet it is deeply undercut. Two small holes on the east side of the main entrance allow access to a steeply sloping ledge about 50' down. This ledge is itself undercut so that it is impossible to descend from this point without the use of ladders or rope. At one time sheep wire was strung through these holes, but this has since been cut down. At the bottom of the drop, a steep breakdown slope descends on

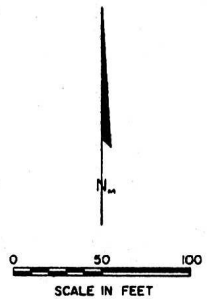
DEVIL'S SINKHOLE

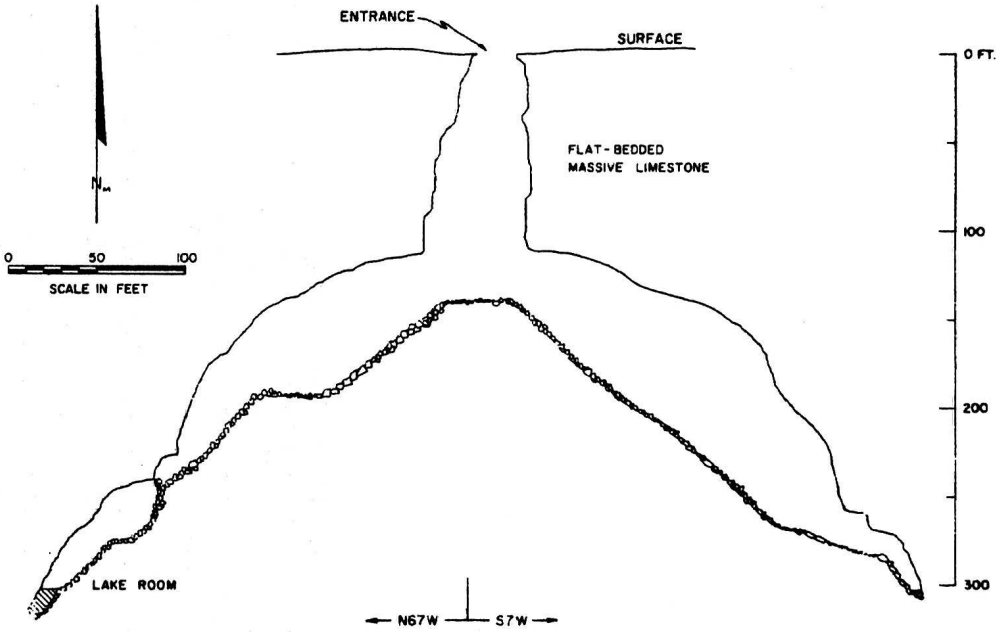
EDWARDS COUNTY, TEXAS

BRUNTON & TAPE SURVEY BY
THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS GROTTO
1963



PLAN





PROFILE

all sides for an additional 160′ to a series of lakes encircling the breakdown "mountain". Although in a few places these lakes may be reached directly by way of the slope, in most places it is necessary to crawl through and among large breakdown slabs for the last 50'. These lakes are quite deep and divers have reached depths of 40'—80′ without reaching a bottom. The breakdown is quite loose and the floor of the lakes covered with silt so that attempts at underwater explor- ation have all been unsuccessful. The depth of the cave was originally reported to be 409′, but an accurate survey reveal- ed the true depth to be about 310'. The actual dimensions of the room, reported on occasion to be one mile in circumfer- ence, (actually about 1200′—OMW) are about 240′ wide by 560' long. The ceiling of the entrance room is sharply terraced and hung with moss and stalactites so that the view from the bottom of the breakdown mountain out of the entrance is among the most impressive in Texas. The cave, surrounded by legends of vast rooms and hidden treasure, has proven to consist of one large room and the much smaller lake rooms (see map)

Geology: the entrance to the cave is in the upper unnamed formation (UUF), stratigraphically not far below the overflying Del Rio Clay, which outcrops on the dirt road to the cave. From all appearances the Devil's Sinkhole represents long-continued stoping, or collapse, into a fairly sizable chamber below. The presently known cave extends almost through the upper dolomitic part of the lower unnamed formation (LUF). Conceivably a horizontal elongated room formed in the middle member of the LUF, much like parts of Blackstone Cave in Terrell County, and was widened beyond the point where the roof arch could support the weight of the overlying rock. Based on the volume of the present cave, exclusive of the underwater section, the pre—collapse room could have had dimensions on the order of 350′ by 550′ by 30' high. Approximately the upper 225' *of* the cave are in the UUF.

Biology: the Devil's Sinkhole is one of the more prominent of the large bat caves of Texas. The colony of Mexican free—tail bats, Tadarida brasliensis mexicana, is estimated at 8,000,000, but this may be too high an estimate. A small colony of the Little Brown Bat, Myotis velifer incautus, is also present, and a few individuals of the eastern pipistrel, Pipistrellus subflavus subflavus, are usually present..." Be not afraid of running into bats on our trip to the sinkhole— this time of year they're either gone south or hibernating, "...also present in large numbers in the cave is the Cave Swallow, Petrochelidon fulva pallida..." These swallows fly out of the sinkhole, circling like bats, and dive-bomb into it, making quite a show. Cave—adapted insects, crustaceans, and spiders also live in the sinkhole.

The Devil's Sinkhole also has an interesting history, but I'm tired of typing so you can ask one of the Chuck Wagon experts about that if you want to know.

"Old Man Wisdom"

The Education of Luke

by Terry Plemons*

"Joe!" Luke roared out, "Look at this!:*

Joe dropped his 'biners which he was shining with Brasso and peered over luke's shoulder into a pile of papers, reference books, and peanut butter. On one page was circled

$$d = vt + \frac{1}{2}at^2 \quad \text{(Eg. 1)}$$

"What's that?" asked Joe, mopping beer from his moustache.

"That's it! No more doubt! No more wasted Gold line!" said Luke, by now almost hysterical. With an elegant swing of his slide rule he knocked over his last glass of Shiner beer.

During the time Luke cleaned up the beer and peanut butter, he regained his senses and began, with an air of sophistication, the exploration of the complicated expres sion of (Eg. 1).

"This equation will tell any competent caver the depth of a Mexican pit. All you need to do is chunk, I mean throw, an average size rock into the pit and count the seconds that elapse before the sound of the rock hitting the pit's bottom returns. We call this the time t. The factor a is the acceleration due to the earth's gravitational field. It is a constant, 32 ft./sec.^{2} (down being positive). The only other constant, depending on the caver that chunks, throws the average size rock, is the initial velocity v."

Joe was completely amazed. He asked, "Luke, how long have you been working on this problem?"

"Three years,," answered Luke, now wondering if the USSS News would publish the profound result so magnificently expressed by (Eg. 1).

Joe sat his mug of Schlitz on the mantle and walked to his book shelf where he selected Physics for the Nurd, a beginners' course text, in basic mechanics written by the renowned Round Rock physicist Jesse McSpadden. McSpadden, as is well known, was responsible for the solution of the complex problem of the dispersion of number four bird shot from a 12-gauge, modified choke shotgun.

Joe opened the book to page 86 and placed it in front of Luke, still somewhat dazed by his recent enlightenment. This contented state of mind was now driven away by the burning scorching truth. McSpadden had, 46 years ago, obtained the result of (Eg. 1). (continued)

* A subtle rebuttal to last issue's learned article on rock dropping? -O.M.W.

The feeling that Luke now began to experience is known to all souls dedicated to the pursuit of truth. It has happened to the perennial PhD candidate, the freshman theme writer, the university professor striving to publish. The feeling may come with a slow, agonizing realization, or, as in Luke's case, with a sudden, merciless mind snap. Often at stake are seven, eight or more years of Wagchuck coffee, gathering of rocks, counting of electrons, or, as in Luke's case, solving of countless complex equations. What to do? Those able to take their grits with a smile push on. Their survival after this turning point is a matter of ingenuity. Luke, with no small assistance from Joe, was one of those who survived.

Joe expertly puffed his pipe and paced before the burning cedar in the fireplace. After half an hour he said, quietly, "There's a way out Luke, there's a way out."

Luke, still in a state of stoned agony, replied, "I don't see how. All the variables have been considered. The solution to the differential equation checked out over and over..."

"No! No!" shouted Joe, "There are factors you have not considered."

"Huh?" said Luke wisely.

"Sure," said Joe, again walking toward the book shelves. "Bid you consider the friction of the rock-air interface?"

"Rock-air interface?" Luke muttered.

"You mentioned something about an average size rock," Joe continued, "What is an average size rock?"

Luke looked at the ceiling and thought a few seconds. He then, authoritatively, proclaimed, "An average size rock is one within reach of the position occupied by a competent caver sitting on the edge of a Mexican pit."

"I see," said Joe with an almost perceptible tone of sarcasm.

Joe took a few puffs on his pipe as he scanned his books. He picked out Sprogettie's El Mechanico Yé Fluid. He looked in the table of contents and found the section concerning the trajectories of projectiles in compressible fluids. On a yellow legal pad he wrote down some notes. He then consulted that well known, exhaustive study of Silliam Brussel, Average Size of Rocks in the Greater Mexican Pit Areas. His

(cont'd)

note takin coninued.

Luke was not doing anything useful and went out for more Shiner beer. Joe continued his researches using his vast collection of reference texts. Throughout th night Joe labored and Luke drank. One could only hear Joe puff- ing on his pipe and Luke opening beer cans. At one point Joe had to call Larlie Ghoving of the Atmospheric Science Department, University of Giddings, to get some figures on the temperature and humidity of the atmosphere of the pit areas of Mexico. This data, to Joe's surprise, was found to be of critical importance in his calculations.

At six the next morning the analysis of the problem was complete. No significant variables had been overlooked. Even convection currents in a pit were considered. Also an error analysis of the human time measuring process was included. Joe got his notes together while Luke finished off the Shiner. They then went to the Wagchuck for some coffee. Joe was reviewing his notes when John "Kansas" Catfish walked up with Marrella Perch.

"What's that?" asked John.

"Look!" said Joe as he pointed to his notes. On the last page was the expression

$$d = vt + \tfrac{1}{2}at^2 + 0(r_{avg})e^{-hy(t_o)}$$

$$- \text{arc tan}\{\alpha T(h)\} + \text{گ}_o{}^t + \text{گ}(\text{ȣ})d\text{ȣ}$$

$$+3\beta(\text{count}) \quad (\text{N!}) \qquad\qquad (\text{Eg. } 2)$$

where

d = depth of Mexican pit,

$0(r_{avg})$ = second order function needed to account for the average rock size.

$e^{-hy(t_o)}$ = exponential function needed to account for the altitude h and humidity y(t) where t_o is the day of the year,

$\alpha T(h)$ = modified time-of-year humidity relationship,

$4\pi\text{گ}_o r^t{}_2 + \rho(\text{ȣ})d\text{ȣ}$ = integral relationship between time t and density of limestone $\rho(\text{ȣ})$ where ȣ is the radius variable of an average size Mexican rock,

β(count) = measure of caver's ability to count seconds in Spanish, and,

The Education of Luke cont'd

N = number (integer format) of years that the caver has been doing vertical caving.

That semester Luke received his PhD in greatmospheri-calbiopsycoanthrophysics with a minor in American History after 1967. He is now chief scientific consultant for USSS.

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* * * * *

A Caver Girl's Letter Her Parents...and some of her thoughts at the time.

Dear Mom and Dad,

Gee, I have the most exciting news to tell yout I've been invited to go to Mexico on a caving, trip over the holidays. Isn't that great? I just knew you'd think so. You always used to say how educational it was to get out and see the world.

No doubt you're wondering what a caving trip is. Do you remember when I wrote to you about that club on campus calling itself the spelunkers? Well, they make scientific exploratory expeditions to caves and pits to examine geological, biological, and mineralogical phenomena.

This is going to be one of the biggest trips of the year, and we plan to do a number of experiments. One thing, we'll be doing is col- lecting exotic cave crickets and other tropical insects.

I always knew that course in rhetoric would come in handy. . .

(continued)

Letter cont'd

I'm sure you'll want to know who I'm going with. Well, there will be six boys, one married couple,and me. All of them are much older and wiser than I am, and they've been around a lot. What I mean is that they know <u>everything</u> about Mexico and crossing the border, etc.1 So you have nothing to fear; I'll be in experienced hands. We'll be camping under the stars every night,, out in the fresh, healthy air. So you don't need to worry about us sleeping in motels or anything like that. And I've never seen any of them drink, so you can be sure I'll be safe the whole time. Also, hav- ing so. many strong men along, I'll be protected from any dangers which I might, encounter in Mexico. This trip should be excellent practice for my Spanish.

Isn't that the truth!

It's the <u>etc</u>.they should worry about.

...a lot of them, no doubt.

But then I've only been to the meetings. Hmmm...wonder what they <u>do</u> do??

Hope they don't remember I'm taking German 406 this year.

I think that should put your minds at ease. If you have any ques- tions, I'll be glad to try to an- swer them.

You'd better write soon: we leave tomor- row afternoon.

Write soon!. I miss you all very much.

Love and kisses,

Kathy

+ + + + +

SEVENTH TSA SALON OF SPELEOLOGICAL PHOTOGRAPHIC ART **** SOMETHING NEW!!****

1. Closing Date: Transparencies and prints must be postmarked no later than midnight, April 7, 1969; or must arrive by April 11, 1969.

2. Eligibility: Open to all. Must be related to caving. Photos that have previously won a ribbon in either a TSA or NSS Salon are not eligible.

3. Classifications:

GROUP	A. SCIENTIFIC	B. OPFN	C. ACTIVITY	D. STORY SERIES
#1 Monochrome prints	1-A	1-B	1-C	1-D
#2 Color prints	2-A	2-B	2-C	2-D
#3 Color transparencies	3-A	3-B	3-C	3-D

4. Monochrome or Color Prints: May be any size from 5 x 7 up to 16 x 20 inches And should be mounted on mounting boards (16 x 20 is best). The following data must appear on the back of each entry: Name and address of the contributor, title and print number (if any. The title may be placed on the front of the mount directly under the lower left of the print in small lettering less than 1/4" high.

5. Color Transparencies: Shall be either 24 x 24 inches mounted for projection or 2 x 2 inch mounts of 35mm, 828 Bantam or Superslides. Slides MUST be spotted in the lower left corner as you wish them to appear on the screen. All slides must contain the entry number and name of the contributor.

6. Judging: SOMETHING NEW THIS YEAR! Judging will be under the direction of cavers, experienced in cave photography and salon ribbon- winning (Kunath & Lindsley, Inc.) Judges will not enter.

7. Entry fee: NO entry fee is required. A maximum of 6 entries per sub-group (1-A, 2-B, and 3-A, etc.) will be accepted. A story series may contain 10 pictures maximum. Judges have the right to change categories, particularly if too few entries are in one group.

8. Shipment: Pack all entries securely in re-usable material, enclosing return postage if entries are to be returned by mail after the conven- tion. Entries may be picked up at the Convention following the Salon presentation Saturday night April 19th. No responsibility for loss or damage will be assumed, however utmost care will be given.

9. Address all entries to: CARL KUNATH; 2302 West Ave. J; San Angelo, Tex. 76903.

ENTRY BLANK

SEVENTH TSA SALON OF SPELEOLOGICAL PHOTOGRAPHIC ART

NAME OF ENTRANT:_____

ADDRESS:_____ CITY _____ STATE_____ ZIP _____

ENTRY DATA FOR PRINTS AND TRANSPARENCIES (Use similar format for additional entries if required)

TITLE	CATEGORY NO.	SERIAL NO.

Return postage enclosed: $___.__

ATTENTION SPELEOGRAPHERS

It's that time of year again for all you cave photographers and anyone else who happens to have a good picture or two of something or other related to caving.

The annual TSA Photo Salon will be held once again this year with all prize winners being displayed at the TSA Annual Convention in April.

Note: Perennial winners Carl Kunath and Pete Lindsley will be the Judges so your chances of winning are 100# better. Closing date for entries is April 7, 1969.

ENTER!

Russell Harmon

(Entry blank on reverse of this page)

OLD CAVER FOLKSONG NO. 2

"O bury me not
On the Gypsum Plain,"
The bearded youth
Sang this sad refrain,
"Where forty caves
Per day are found,
And a dissertation
Lies underground."

(Lines forgotten)

. . . . .

They heeded not
His final plea,
And they buried him by
The State Line Caffee.

attributed (erroneously)
to A. Richard Smith

ENTRY BLANK FOR TSA PHOTO SALON

ON REVERSE SIDE

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Old Man Wisdom:

I am a young and innocent freshman who wants to be a caver, but none of the guys ever invite me on their trips.
What should I do?

Clyde

Dear Clyde:

Mmmmmmmmmmmmm. . . . . .

OMW

Dear Wize One:

I am a beautiful flaxen-haired lass who joined the cavers in September. Since then Russ Harmon has been calling me every other night.
Why?

Confused

Dear Confused:

Why not?

OMW

Dear OMW:

I have been caving for thirty-five years, two months, and three days and have yet to ..... How come?

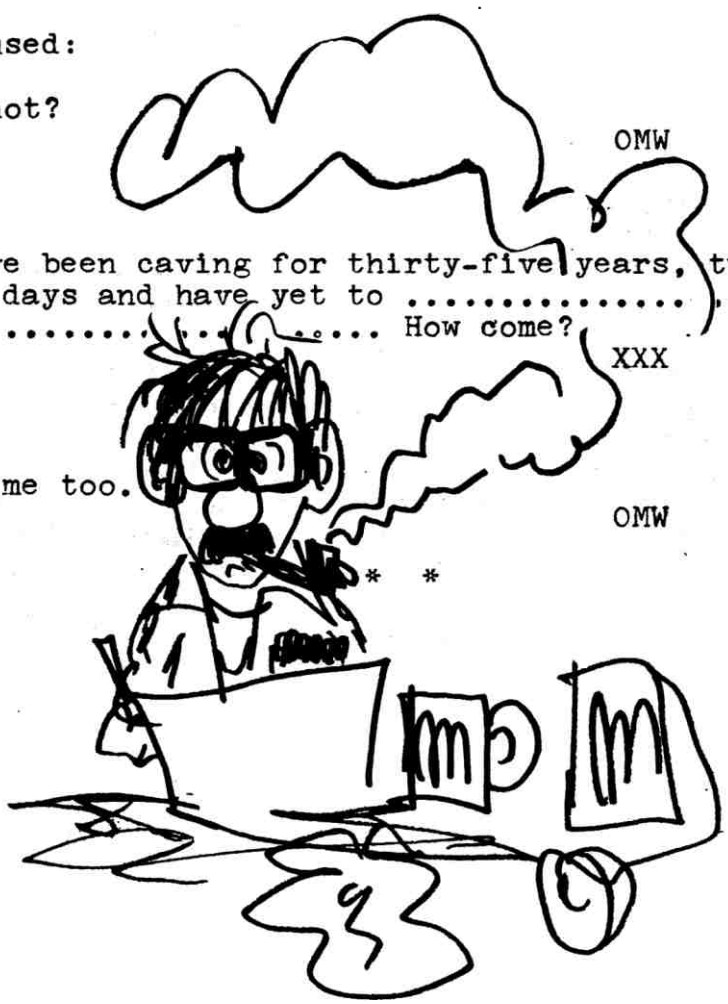
XXX

Dear XXX:

Yea, me too.

OMW

* *



SHORT REPORT ON AAAS MEETING

A few Texas spelunkers (among them Bill Elliott, Jonathan Davis, and A. Richard Smith) visited the 135th meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) in Dallas especially for the two NSS—sponsored meetings on December 27. The morning meeting, Biological Stud- ies in Texas and Mexican Caves, co—chaired by Dr. Robert W. Mitchell and James Reddell, was highlighted by Reddell's paper on distribution of Mexican cave fauna. Noted blospe— leologists such as John Holsinger, Nell Causey, Ken Christiansen, and Bob Mitchell also presented papers.

The afternoon meeting comprised contributed papers on cave geology, ranging from cave development in the Canadian Rockies to catastrophic sinkhole formation in South Africa. A. Richard Smith summarized cave areas in Texas; Jim Quinlan, resident speleologist at UT, talked about South African sinkholes.

A biospeleology party in the Mitchell hotel room was invaded by all the spelunkers, most of whom eventually bedded at Katherine Goodbar's.

A. Richard Smith

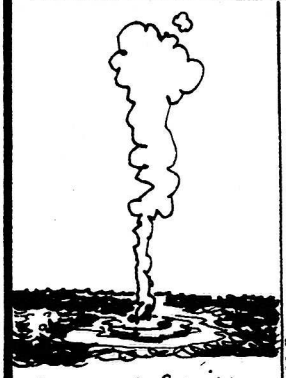
"That, of course, is the dangerous part about caves: you don't know how far they go back, sometimes, or where a passage behind may lead to, or what is waiting for you inside.'.'. As they passed under the arch, it was good to hear the wind and the rain outside instead of all about them, and to feel safe...they explored the cave from end to end.

"lt seemed quite a fair size, but not too large and mysterious. It had a dry floor and some comfortable nooks...So they spread out their wet things on the floor, and got dry ones out of their bundles; then they made their blankets comfortab- le, got out their pipes and blew smoke rings...They talked and talked, and forgot about the storm...and so they dropped off to sleep one by one."

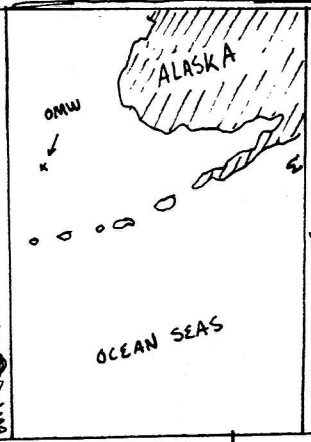
—The Hobbit

OLD MAN WISDOM

If the reader remembers (?) in the biography of O.M.W. we were in the Bering Sea with O.M.W a COAST GUARDER + LIGHT HOUSE TENDER



The island of Light has sunk for lack of



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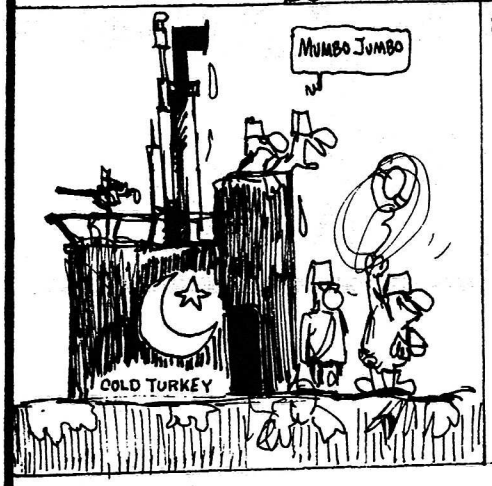
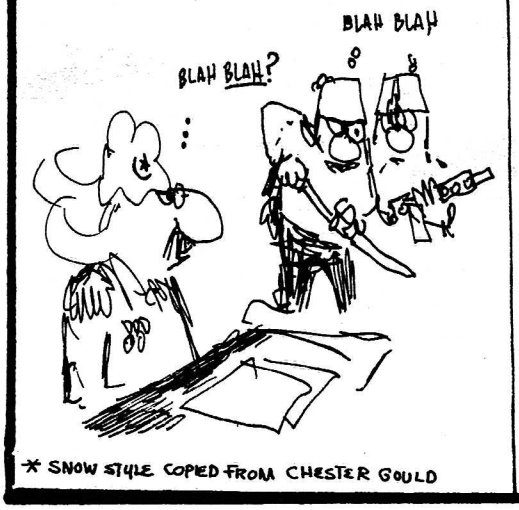
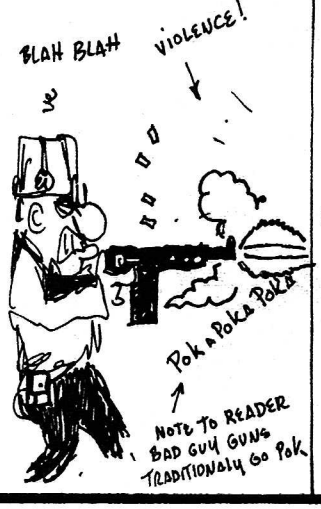
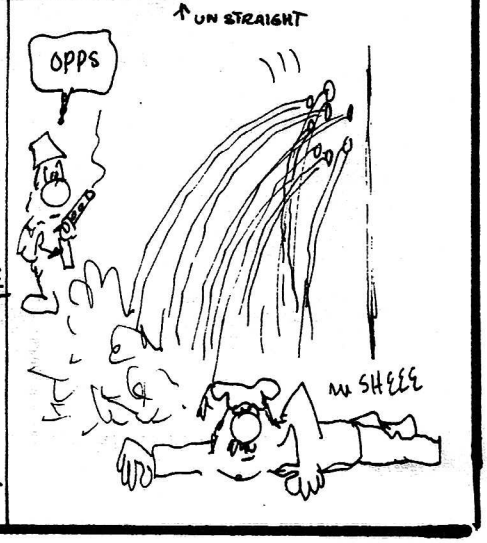
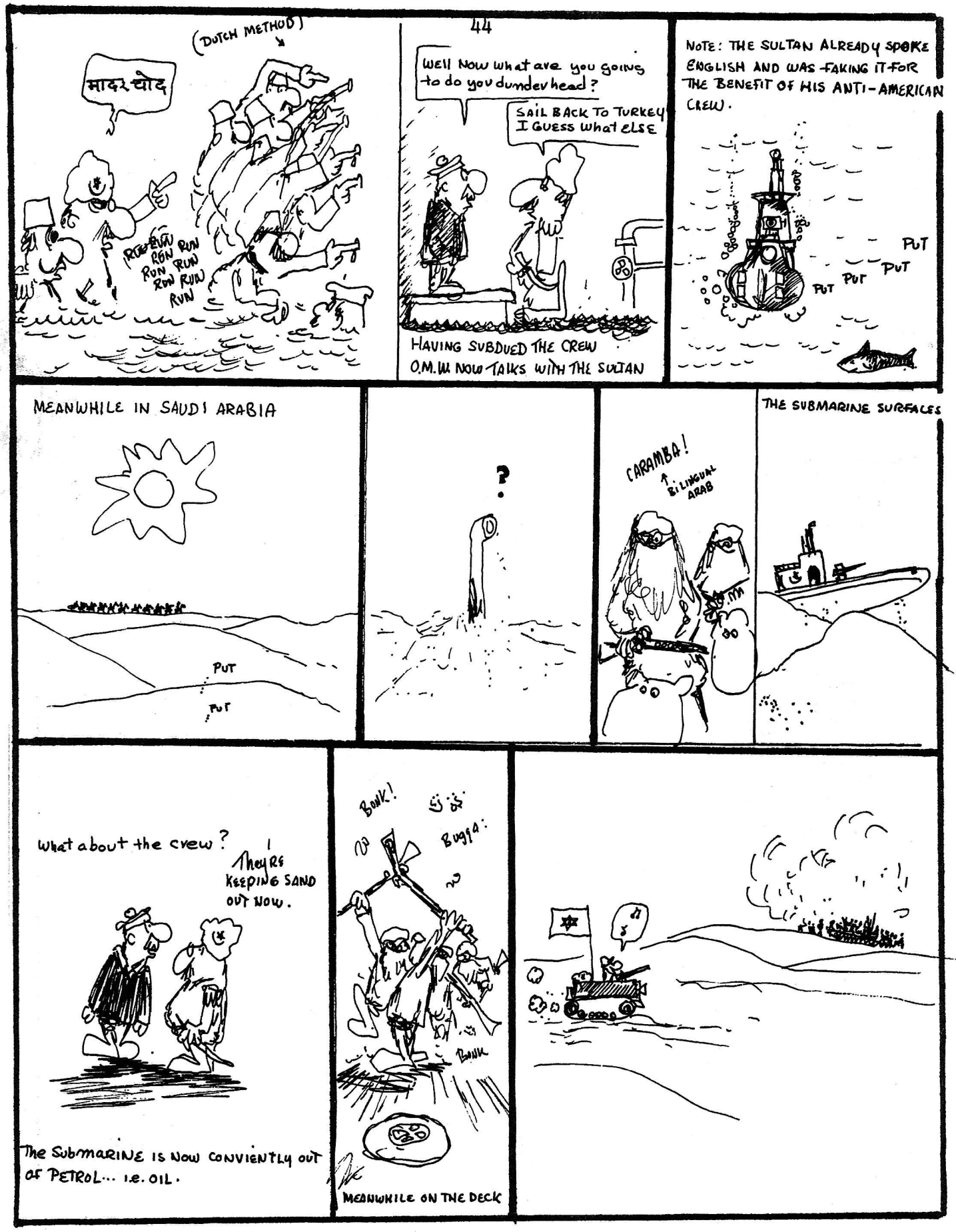




* SNOW STYLE COPIED FROM CHESTER GOULD






(DUTCH METHOD)
मादर चोद
RUN RUN RUN RUN RUN RUN RUN RUN
WELL NOW what are you going to do you dumdev head?
SAIL BACK TO TURKEY I GUESS what ELSE
HAVING SUBDUED THE CREW O.M.W NOW TALKS WITH THE SULTAN
NOTE: THE SULTAN ALREADY SPOKE ENGLISH AND WAS FAKING IT FOR THE BENEFIT OF HIS ANTI-AMERICAN CREW.
PUT
PUT
PUT
PUT
MEANWHILE IN SAUDI ARABIA
PUT
PUT
?
CARAMBA!
BILINGUAL ARAB
THE SUBMARINE SURFACES
What about the crew?
They're KEEPING SAND OUT NOW.
The Submarine is Now conviently out of PETROL... i.e. OIL.
BONK!
Bugga!
BONK
MEANWHILE ON THE DECK

HMM A SUBMARINE IN DISTRESS
तेरी माँ की चूत
MOSHE!
TALLY HO
LETS SPLIT GANG
RUN RUN RUN RUN
SHIT
ITS A...
WHAT ELSE? HI GANG
HE MAY HAVE SAVED US BUT I'M STILL A
FRIENDLY TURK
PING PING PING PING PING PING
PINGA DEL PING
PUFF
POO
TWIRL
WHAT HAPPENS NOW?
LETS SEE TEN BULLETS, 10 MINUTES OF MY TIME, ONE RESCUE.. $18.29 PLUS TAX AND SURCHAGE $21.48
$21.48?

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