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By

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This journal is a nonfictional(?) account of the GVSC Geology Department's Ozark-Ouachita field trip. It is a nonedited edition - leave on your coffee table at your own risk.

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This journal is dedicated to GeoMom (and various other Geo'relatives)

Day 1 - Saturday, 3/15 8 a.m.

Everyone has made it to Loutit on time (no over-sleepers in this group!). However, we're a little late getting on the road because of the last minute packing of the vans. Some dummies didn't bring their gear on Friday like they were supposed to.

Tom's bon voyage speech and lecture was short and to the point: "Have fun!"

Everyone settles down in the vans with a sense of anticipation and excitement (in some cases - sleepiness - should've gone to bed earlier last night).

At Bauer Road and 36th Street (near campus) Tom swerves van I off and back onto the road for the first time (do you still wonder why we tease him about his driving?).

At 28th Avenue Tom misses the turn to the highway (maybe he likes to take the long way).

Lorraine and Ingrid swear that they saw a cow on a house roof. The rest of the van saw nothing. Really, you two! What did you have for breakfast?

Finally, Tom finds the highway and we're headed south (sort of) - at least we're headed away from GVSC!

Soon the excitement and anticipation turn into the reality of a long boring ride (we've already seen glacial topography!). Some of the people in van II try to "catch 40" - but Lorraine and Ingrid are still "hyper" and no one is allowed to sleep. The time is passed with an exhilarating (yawn) card game of "99" (similar to "screw your neighbor").

Rick and Joe give us tidbits of local history of the southern Michigan towns as we pass through.

At last, we're out of Michigan - everyone looks at the Notre Dame dome in wonder (it hasn't collapsed?).

Ingrid and Lorraine settle down a bit, and van II gets a nap.

The cookies in van II are going fast. Sheryl remembers that van I doesn't know there are cookies in their vehicle. Steve passes them and a note is held up to let them know. Looking for the cookies was the most lively van I got all day.

It would be nice to have the CB radios now - they'll be picked up in Bloomington.

Van II is worried - gas tank is very low. Van I is informed. Van II about to mutiny - we're riding on empty! At last, Tom does a sort of a U-turn across an intersection, into a gas station.

The two vans are vacated in favor of the restrooms. Thank goodness the women's line is only half as long as the men's. A little energy is used up by throwing and chasing the frisbee.

Tom drives van I away. Van II waits for Andy (poor guy was last in line). When he returns to the van, he gives up his seat next to Rick for one by Ingrid and Lorraine.

Van II has fun with the auto flip signs. Rick flashes "My Place or Yours?" at females in other cars. Andy flashes "Single?" Everyone gets other cars to "Smile". "Idiot!" came in handy a few times also.

While discussing the future cave experience - Lorraine wonders what she should do if she has to go to the bathroom while she's inside. We don't care - as long as she's behind us!

Rick gets excited at leaving till behind and seeing first outcrops.

Stop in Bloomington to get groceries and to meet Tom's daughter to pick up CB's. Steve connects them in the vans while the rest pick up the first day's grocery supplies. Isn't it fun to unpack the vans and trailer to get to the coolers?

Sheryl tries to get some interesting stories from the people in van I. Each person talked to says van I is boring.

Still in the grocery store parking lot - a car with a few girls in it stops to ask "hey, you guys going on a camping trip?". Jeff, Joe, Dean and Rick immediately stop everything to give the car their full attention (you should've seen them all - turning in unison - we didn't know their attention could be gotten so quickly and thoroughly!)

The CE's are finally connected and we're on our way again. It is nice to have them - the vans are now named Mobile 1 and 2.

First geologic stop for geodes at the Harrodsburg and Salem limestone contact. Lots of geodes collected; saw many fossils and a few even found the stylolites. Everyone enjoyed using up their stored energy to tromp along the outcrop and hammer on rocks.

Riding through southern Indiana's karst topography, Lorraine proposes the interesting hypothesis that dinosaurs became extinct by falling into sinkholes. Ingrid is dismayed when she is mistakenly credited with the hypothesis.

A stop at Tolliver Swallow Hole to see the St. Genevieve limestone, and chert, with fossils. More samples collected (already the vans seem full of samples - ha! little did we know).

Back to Garrett's Farm to set up camp. Sheryl and Ingrid have problems getting their tent up (where are the *!&#? instructions?).

Dinner is prepared - boy were we starved.

Next on the agenda - the cave! (Just imagine ominous music here as you read)

Oh my goodness! I thought it was bad when we started to slip over muddy ground the slimy rocks got in the way. The mud got deeper and more slick. Our group turned into a slapstick comedy team - everyone took turns at having their legs fly from underneath themselves to land on their derriere. Lorraine, Sheryl and Joe were some of the first to try this. After a few close calls of their own - the laughing from others slowed down. However, it didn't stop - it was either giggle some or cry as we sloshed and slid our way around holes, and rocks with the potential to bruise. The cave got smaller. Our fearless leader stopped at "the point of no return" to warn us that the rest of the cave was only one way. He then sat down and slid down a slope to a chorus of moans and groans from the rest of the group (the most common comments being, "Oh shit!" and "you've got to be kidding"). Andy, Ingrid and Sheryl went

down as a "train". Ingrid squashed her ankle. By now everyone was covered with mud. Tom led the group farther into the cave. We began to duck walk, then crawl on hands and knees. Then we were slithering through a few inches of mud and water on our bellies. With the walls closing in and the heart pounding with a hopeless sense of never getting out - we climbed up a wall of rocks and wiggled through a small hole into the main room of the cave. What a feeling of accomplishment (and relief!). We were all anxiously waiting for Joe to get out - we weren't sure he'd fit through the opening (if not, we planned to starve him for a day or two - like Pooh Bear). At last, there's his head coming through - and the group dissolves in laughter. Joe has a footprint across his face - thanks to Dean.

Everyone was willing to try it again - we tried to get into another cave (near the rise pool) to see the Lost River underground - but we were stopped inside by a wall of ice.

Walked through the pasture - carefully watching out for cow piles - back to camp to wash up (sort of) at the pump.

Tom zonked out right away. The rest enjoyed a small campfire before heading to their sleeping bags. Various talking and laughing was heard for a little while. Then all was quiet - until the cow moo'd (or was that Rick?). The cows, or Sheryl's tent flapping in the wind, or first night sleeplessness kept everyone from getting a good night's sleep. And, someone was snoring loud enough for the whole camp to hear!

Day 2 - Sunday, 3/16

We were awakened early by a terribly cheerful "Good Morning, Good Morning!" The crowing rooster at least sounded properly grumpy for the morning.

As we're getting dressed in our tents we heard Greg hollering at Larry - accusing him of putting on the wrong pants - Greg was mistaken, tho'. We tried to find out who snored. Although no one is sure, Joe is the most likely suspect.

After breakfast we hiked down to the rise pool of the Lost River.

Then, break camp and move out! A quick stop at the Orangeville rise. Rick stepped 'n something with a strong odor. Mobile 2 made him hang his boot over the mirror outside the van.

A stop at the Beaver Bend limestone - fossil collecting (brachiopods, a few trilobites). Saw an unconformity.

Another brief stop to see an erosional chimney.

Tom keeps us up-to-date in our guidebook, telling us when to follow the road logs and when to read the reports. (By the way, the W. in Joseph W. Evankovich's name is for William).

Mobile 2 gets out the cookies again - almost gone now.

A gas station stop. Due to the long line at the men's room, Tom uses the women's (he made Sheryl guard the door outside so neither he nor any little old ladies were unnecessarily surprised).

Saw a sign in town: TROY'S LIVE ENTERTAINMENT JEFF AND JERRY. What is it you two do?

A long, rainy ride midday. We had to eat lunch inside the vans at a gas station. This time the women had to join the men's line.

Stop in town (sorry - I forgot to write down the name of it) to visit rock shops. Lots of fluorite there - many nice samples were bought. A few people found the cafe that sold ice cream cones. Then on to the old mine to look for fluorite samples.

Moving on to visit the Caseyville sandstone. Is it aeolian or fluvial? Either way it's rather exciting to see crossbedding in an outcrop instead of in photos.

Andy runs through a field of weeds singing "The hills are alive ...". The rest check out an old house nearby (cautiously looking for hounddogs and crazy people with shotguns, first).

On our way again. Mobile 2 discusses the previous night's cave experience. Joe is still complaining about Dean's foot in his mouth - said it tasted like earth dung. Joe also hopes that the Viburnum mine we're supposed to visit tomorrow has no small areas to crawl through. And, he talks about his GeoMom. Noone realized until now that Joe isn't always as quiet as he is in class.

Arrive at Dixon Springs to stay for the night. Tom talks the ranger into unlocking a few cabins for us to stay in. It's still raining, so we cook dinner inside.

As Sheryl goes across the driveway to borrow matches, she hears someone say "Hullo Shurl". There's only one person that can kill her name like that -- Norm and his family have driven down from Carbondale to visit the caravan. After dinner, a sing-a-long started in one of the cabins - we sang every song that Craig could play on the guitar (in other words, we sang just about everything that anyone knew half of the words to). Dean, John and Joe are party-poopers and won't come over to join our singing.

Tom's new nickname is Rice Krispie (the cereal you hate to get up to).

Day 3 - Monday, 3/17

This a.m. we are woken (waked?) up by the Avon Lady, the men's cabin by the Fuller Brush man. The cabins were warmer than outside and were dry. The spiders and moths could've stayed outside, though.

There was a little extra time this morning before we had to leave, so Steve, Larry, Jerry, Sheryl, Suzanne, and Ingrid braved an icy stream to wash their hair. It was COLD - but it sure felt good to have clean hair. Ingrid got sand and pebbles in hers - compliments of Suzanne.

On the way again - the vans get "scrambled". Mobile 2 gets Larry, Jerry and Suzanne. Van 1 gets Rick, Ingrid and Sheryl (and the best deal!?)

Since it is St. Patrick's Day Tom has the Blarney Stone contest. We're to write down the lithology and age of it. A saspirillo (or equivalent) goes to the closest answer, and to the best facetious guess.

Across the Mississippi River and into Missouri. Tom's threat to throw in all who didn't wear green today isn't carried out.

Tom tells Suzanne that Missouri is full of chert (big cherts, little cherts, brown cherts, red cherts, white cherts, fat cherts, thin cherts and T cherts)

Rain showers most of the morning.

Rick told Mobile 2 that his eyes popped as we drove up the St. Francis uplift. The rest of us felt our ears pop.

Missouri is called the "show-me" state. We decided it should really be called the "tease-me" state.

Good pie and coffee, and nice people at a cafe in Fredricktown. Sign on the wall said: "The cows may come, the cows may go, but the bull here goes on forever", kind of reminds you of the Geology Department at GVSC, doesn't it?

Great outcrops showing nonconformity (Precambrian felsite/Cambrian sandstone) with dikes, fault zones, and jointing. Faults! real ones - not pictures.

In Mobile 1, Greg keeps asking Tom, "is this the LaMott sandstone"? Tom tells Greg, "this is your area Greg, you're the expert on it". Greg said nothing. Tom mumbles, "boy, that sure quieted him down fast".

Good grief - the rain is getting thick .. almost looks like .. oh no! ... it is!... snow! I remember the Avon Lady promising us balmy "shorts" weather this a.m. - what happened?

The people with religious connections are getting together for a direct request for nicer weather. Ingrid promises to send a note with the first lightning bolt.

Tom explains a rousing travel game to Mobile 1. If there are 3 or more cows in a field on your side of the road, you get one point. You keep adding up the points to a certain destination. However, if there is a cemetery (3 or more headstones) on your side - you lose all your points. Fun! Fun! Keep this one in mind for future trips!

I should put in a note here that Tom's driving hasn't been too bad (knock on wood - 7½ days to go!)

I don't know why everyone thought Mobile 1 was boring - or maybe it's only less dull because Ingrid, Rick and Sheryl are there now?

Geez - I knew I wrote too soon ---- Tom swerves off the road just before a bridge.

Stop for groceries and gas in Ironton. Ingrid and Sheryl can't face sandwiches today so they renege their food group in favor of hamburgers.

Saw Ironton's city hall with battle scars. We were supposed to meet Monica here - but she didn't show.

On our way again. Tom drives through a flashing red light.

A stop to see is Elephant Rock - group picture is taken here. A dog (4-legged) joined our group. Andy wanted to keep him to sleep with. The discussion of who's slept with dogs (4- and 2-legged) was renewed. Ann notices the lichens on the rocks.

Hey Lorraine - what's that about superglue? On to Pilot Knob to see the iron formation. A great hike to the top (huff and puff here) It sure felt good to get some exercise!

A few brave souls climbed to the very top (Joe, Rick, Dean, Andy, Sheryl, Ingrid, John, and Suzanne.) The rest went into a cave. Found out later that Suzanne thought she had to climb up there – she wouldn't have done it otherwise.

After a ride through hillbilly country, we arrive at Johnson's Shut-ins (Shut-ins means gorge or narrow valley).

Sunshine! We walk down to see the river and climb down the rocks.

The group splits in deciding where to stay for the night – there are no facilities at Johnson's Shut-ins. So we drive out to check out another camp-ground. Rick promises to use his polish "charm (?)" on the hillbilly ladies to get us a place to stay. Needless to say, we camped as usual.

We rode down a gravel road – with puddles all the way across. Then we forded a stream (water running over the bridge) in search of a possible shower. The camp was closed. We had to unhitch the trailer and turn it around by hand to get out. We returned to Johnson's Shut-ins to stay.

Ingrid and Sheryl have problems setting up their tent (*#!%). Just as they're finishing, an angry ranger drives up and wants to know why we didn't register. Also, why are we camped in the middle of the playground (because we're a fun group?).

Tom reads the Blarney Stone contest entries. Ingrid wins the "sasparillo" (which, by the way, she still hasn't been able to collect.)

The winning entry was:

The Blarney Stone is a gneiss, metamorphosed by hot lips. Also chemically weathered by salvia streams emitted during metamorphism. The stone is of Devotian age. Chips of enamel found around the stone originated from teeth – By Ingrid Verhagen

Other entries:

The Blarney Stone is an aphanitic schist with rare blastoporpha of blaineyite. The blastoporpha are clovershaped, which is the way to its luck. The Blarney Stone is easily identified by its characteristic taste. Stone tasters otherwise known as stoners, say it tastes like the Irish Whiskey "Bushmilk 57" to be precise. The stoners have spent many hours tasting the rock to determine this. The facilities it belongs to is the Greenschist Facies, quite a rare outcrop in Ireland. It is usually found near old Irish bars. English geologists have not been able to explain this occurrence. ... Jerry Naski

Purely a gneiss – a metamorphic rock – from the greenstone schist facies (Ireland) Cambrian, epidote, chlorite, quartz schist? A distinguishing feature of the blarney stone is the subsequent good fortune that befalls onto the geologist, or anyone for that matter, upon kissing of the stone. But, one must be Irish. The rock is common to Ireland and frequently found in association with shamrocks, leprechauns, and castles. It dates back to middle earth time when leprechauns and hobbits were prevalent. ... Larry Flynn

The Blarney Stone – in Ireland, a locally found rock type with a crystal arrangement that produces a feathery, fibrous, platelike structure. It was aptly named after a famous Irish geologist, Pete Moss Blarney. (This is also an Irish salad composed of spinach, bologna, chili con carne, and a pinch of bog)(of course only eaten on St. Patrick's Day) ... Craig Swanson

Gregg guesses that the blarney stone is an unmetamorphosed volcanic rock (basalt). Craig says he's part Irish.

John Guesses Triambic Marble

The real Blarney Stone is Mississippian limestone.

Three geology students from Cincinnati are also camping at Johnson's Shutins. They come over to say "hello". Tom invites them to visit Viburnum Mine with us tomorrow.

The temperature has dropped considerably - it is very COLD!

After dinner, a campfire is started (well...I think one was started - no one is sure). Everyone agrees that they hate rabbits (ask John for explanation!). Some even detest, deplore and despise rabbits (and even think those cute little bunnies are disgusting). Polish jokes - too many of them - were told. They evolved into more risqué jokes. Sheryl told one of the jokes from her collection. Since you asked for it in the journal, here it is (of course, you must provide your own hand motions): There was a guy who had a deaf daughter. She wanted to know the news but couldn't hear the TV. So her father wrote a letter to a local TV station asking if someone could do the news in sign language. The station manager called the guy and asked him if he would be willing to do it. They arranged a time for a tryout. So the father went to the TV station with a speech prepared to try on camera. The cameras began to roll and the father began his speech in sign language. The station manager yelled "cut! - you can't do that on TV - it looks insulting". The father explains the sign is for "ladies". The station manager hesitantly lets him continue. So the father continues. The station manager yells "cut, cut! You cannot do that on TV - that looks like something that should be censored". The father patiently explains that the sign is for "gentlemen". The station manager looks at him skeptically and lets him continue. The father starts again - and soon the station manager yells "cut! That's definitely obscene - we can't let you do that on TV!" The father explains that it's just the beginning of his speech: "Ladies and gentlemen, It gives me great pleasure..." You dared me to print it - and there it is folks!

Andy told a few bad jokes to "the guys". He got embarrassed when he realized Sheryl was listening also.

The jokes finally ran out. Tom refused to tell his "T" joke - he goes to bed. Others soon go to sleep, too. The "party group" stays up as usual.

The guys from Cincinnati come over to visit again (Brian, Joe? and Jeff). Joe E. tells us about a high school teacher he had, named Mr. Mullins (Moon), who used to give everyone "Z's" for misbehavior. ("Z" is pronounced with a Kentucky accent.)

We discussed possible names for the softball team. One suggestion was the GeoMom's - we could all wear aprons for a uniform? (No - not just aprons!)

Finally everyone goes to their tents. Something hilarious was going on in Joe's tent. (Dean and John were there, too) - they were laughing for quite a while. Andy and Rick tried to fake a few snores. Ingrid and Sheryl talked and complained of the cold.

Again, someone was snoring loudly in the middle of the night. Rick was suspected, but John said it was Joe.

Sheryl, Ingrid and Suzanne were heard at 1:30 a.m. We were complaining of the cold (and misery loves company!). It was so COLD!!! We were actually looking forward to getting up so we didn't have to try to sleep anymore.

Day 4 - Tuesday, 3/18

Tom got up and started the van right next to Ingrid and Sheryl's tent - we were almost asphyxiated! But the warm van sure felt good. It was one fast mad dash from the sleeping bag to clothes to van! Everyone had frozen milk and cold cereal, inside the van for breakfast. You should've seen Rick's face when the milk he poured on his cereal "glopped" out of the container.

Under arctic conditions, wet frosty tents were taken down and packed away. Everyone piled into the vans to thaw out, and head toward the Viburnum mine.

It was a good mine tour - long, but good. Jim and Steve were the geologists who showed us through (Steve went to Southern Illinois University). We had to wear hard hats and utility belts with rescuers, battery packs and lights. That added up to lots of extra weight to carry around.

Each person got some galena samples, a few found calcite crystals, also some chalcopyrite. We had to wait below until they got the truck out of the elevator shaft. It was nice to be above ground again. It was agonizing to wait at the top in the shower room. As someone said, "so close, and yet so far".

After 4½ hours in the mine, we were relieved when Tom turned down the mill tour.

We went to Viburnum Park for lunch after getting groceries and gas. The tents were laid out to dry in the sun.

A quiet drive (all are tired) up to Taum Sauk to see the unconformity. It was decided unanimously not to climb up to see the storage lake.

Grocery stop in Van Buren. The town is "checked out" for a bar.

We set up camp at Big Springs - the campground has bathrooms - with running water (cold - but it's there!)

Almost all hurry through dinner - Tom says we can take the van back into town. The cold water is braved to get cleaned up for the big night!

About 9:30-10:00 we hunt down the only bar in Van Buren, a "disco" (country western) - by jukebox. We started drinking (what else?) Coor's. And after everyone had a few, the guys were persuaded to dance. Since there were only four women in the group - some of the guys had to pair up with each other. The whole group was on the dance floor. Josie (that good looking tall waitress with the afro) led the group around the bar in a train dance. Unfortunately, the floor was cleared when a slow song played on the jukebox. Jeff was jealous when Sheryl danced with GeoJoe. In fact, Jeff only danced once all night - and that was with Joe. He refused to dance with anyone else. Later he said, "Joe made my heart thump!" Around midnight we finished the pyramid of 47 Coor's cans. Since noone had the ability left to balance more, we decided to go back to camp. While everyone waited in the cold van, Sheryl and Steve danced one last dance. And thanks to Greg for driving the van for us.

Everyone went to sleep pretty fast. But, Dean and Joe were heard laughing for a while. It was later reported that they were having a "contest" in their tent. Dean was heard to say, "Geez, Joe! You must have stored that one for a month - it really reeks!" You guys should remember that tents are not soundproof!

Those who went to the bar agree that it was one of the warmest nights to sleep so far. We all slept very well.

Day 5 - Wednesday, 3/19

We all got to sleep in late today - until 6:30! It was light outside when we got up. There were birds singing (or making noise, depending on whether you wanted to get up or not). There was one very big bird clanking on pots and pans (I think it was the Avon Lady) and the Fuller Brush man stumbling around camp).

Craig had gotten up earlier to fish. He caught only minnows - which his food group refused for dinner.

Broke camp - stopped shortly to see the Big Springs (blue water) and then headed toward Table Rock. Except for driving time, we're on "liberty" today. Tom decided to wait for lunch until we arrived and set up camp.

Rick, Sheryl and Ingrid attempted a swim but the water was too cold. The weather was beautiful - sunny, 67°.

Most people headed into town (Branson, MO, tourist city) Tom and Craig went fishing. Some stayed at camp to catch up on sleep or hike.

In town, a laundromat was invaded. We wandered around the town and found 2 possible bars to check out later in the evening. Postcards were sent. Phonecalls to home were made. We tried to buy an "Ozark" T-shirt, but none of the stores were open.

We returned to camp (Tom and Craig caught no fish - Craig broke his pole on the big one that got away).

There, the time was spent hiking up Table Rock (Baird Mountain) or playing soccer, or going for a walk or sleeping or talking.

About half the group returned to Branson for pizza instead of facing a Coleman stove again. A very lively conversation at dinner - religion, woman's lib, and sex were discussed and/or argued. We found out who were the "liberated" in the group! (By the way, guess who left that article about sex in the lab for all to read last term? You know the one Steve took home to study?)

The pizza group walked over to meet the rest of the caravan at the Brown Jug Lounge. The drinks were cheap, but the band was rotten. How come none of the women would sing along with the guy from the band? Who ordered all those pitchers of beer?

Craig looked like he was having a good time dancing with Lorraine.

Andy left for another bar - said he was going to pick up a girl so he could go home with her and get a shower.

About half the group decided to give up trying to imagine the band was good, and returned to camp. Others played pool. And a few followed Andy to the other bar (The Cotton Pickers). There was a great band there - we got in 1 or 2 dances before we had to leave. Poor Andy - if only there was more time - he could've had a shower - but he had to return to camp with the rest of the grubby group.

Back at camp we found Tom wandering around - on the lookout for skunks. One of them had tried to share Suzanne's tent. They were scared away when Tom hissed at them.

A few tempted fate (i.e. skunks) to go for a late walk. However the polecats weren't seen again (probably couldn't stand the smell of us no shower in 5 days!)

Dean and Joe woke everyone up at 4 a.m. - they thought the skunk was by their tent.

Day 6 - Thursday, 3/20

A few hearty souls (Lorraine, Jeff and Jerry) got up early to climb Table Rock for the sunrise.

The rest crawled out of their tents at the usual time (as late as possible).

The vans were cleaned out and repacked after breakfast.

The drive to Arkansas was rainy, cloudy, and misty - poor visibility. The weather got a "Z".

Tom tells us of Eureka Springs - there are no intersections. Because it seemed like a good thing to do on a gloomy day, Tom stops there so we can visit the local shops and have coffee at the cafe. The people are friendly. Our waitress is surprised to learn that the Ouachita Mts., are in Arkansas.

Back on the road, Joe gloats because he's winning the "cow" game. Sheryl wonders why all the cemeteries are on her side of the road.

There are no Standard stations in Arkansas.

The ride was very boring today - the weather cleared somewhat but is still threatening. Passed some dinosaurs.

Besides playing the cow game, van 1 kept things exciting by taking pictures of the others sleeping in the van. Joe and Rick made so much noise getting the camera ready, they woke Sheryl up before they got the picture. They both try to take pictures of the scenery outside (mountains and valleys) but the trees keep getting in the way.

Drive into Fort Smith, Arkansas. The sun is out. Two gas tanks are on empty - still no Standard stations. Texaco will do - a fast lunch at a deli across the street (yuk!)

Finally, something to do - the road log begins again, and we're in Oklahoma. The first geologic stop of the day at a sandstone outcrop - the flank of an anticline. The weather goes back to being rotten. It is cold and very, very windy! We're reminded that Oklahoma is known for tornadoes (as the low dark clouds blow overhead).

It stays rainy and windy and cold - the weather is dark. Do we have to camp in this?

A stop for groceries, gas and then beer - its going to be cold in Oklahoma tonight (the people in the store report temperatures in the 70's earlier today).

Joe tells Ingrid that he likes her, no matter what Sheryl says.

Drove past a fault zone. Stop to see flute casts. The lizard someone found gets more attention than the outcrop.

At Cedar Lake we found one open bathroom in the campground. It may be cold but it feels good to get the hair washed again. Camp was set up in between the trees. The ticks joined us.

No town to visit so we disco'd to the tape player around the campfire. A new dance was invented - the Pigeonite Dance. (found out who's coordinated and who's not). Also, the high kicks were attempted in a chorus line.

Andy keeps asking everyone when they like to make love (he's a morning person!) Ingrid thinks he's talking about brushing teeth.

The clouds have cleared away. Joe points out some of the constellations. Either he knows his stars well - or we're gullible. Joe said he had a good joke to tell us - but then he never would tell it!

All turn in early. For once no snoring was heard (skunks neither). Those frogs sure had a crazy "laugh" though.

Day 7 - Friday, 3/21

The first day of spring! Everyone seems to get up easily this a.m. I think we're just getting used to the cold. I knew those freezing days in the lab this past winter would be good for something - we're all acclimated to the chill.

Andy says he had a dream about Sheryl - that she pulled the legs off of the poor lizard we saw yesterday. You really know how to flatter someone Andy.

Packing and unpacking the van is a routine, instead of a chore now. Sheryl and Ingrid can get their tent up and down in a few minutes with relatively little trouble.

The day is beautiful - clear and sunny. We drive out to see the last 2 stops we missed yesterday. At the first is wild flysch - how did those boulders get there?

Next stop - right angle jointed sandstone. While pointing out some features, Tom slides down the hill on his stomach. Joe says that the outcrop is so exciting that if GeoMom saw it she wouldn't be able to finish her ironing that day.

Riding in the van again. The scenic views are great! Stop for pictures - WOW! It gets better - more mountains, more picture stops - the view is indescribable.

Back into Arkansas - rest stop near Mena. Stop to see folds (S or Z? Joe thinks Z).

Rick tells his "fleas in Florida" joke (you'll have to ask him to tell it - I can't print that one). Joe says the joke brings back memories. Boy, did he blush!

Lunch stop near Collier Spring and looking for quartz crystals. Lots of nice samples collected.

Andy and Rick roll boulders down the hill toward Sheryl. Joe tries to push her into the creek - this must be "pick on Sheryl" day. Help.

Ann and Suzanne almost fall in by themselves.

Joe finds a sample so good that GeoMom will burn her cookies when she sees it. Dean finds some nice ones, too. Jeff always finds something (and they're always large samples).

Larry is the last one back in the van as usual.

Did you all notice that Suzanne didn't wear her hat today? Ingrid has borrowed it for a while.

Stops at the rock shops. Joe tells the van that those big chunks of blue glass look good in fish aquariums - the fish smile more. Rick says the glass enhances the fish's sex lives. Gee - ya learn something new everyday - this trip has been so educational!

Joe begs for a small bite of Sheryl's ice cream bar. Of course, Sheryl is so nice she lets him eat half of the ice cream bar in one bite! He eats the ice cream stick too.

Outcrop stop - the guys understand cleavage now.

Saw the phonolite dike (weathered) - everyone collects whatstones (Arkansas novaculite).

Grocery stop. While throwing the frisbee to Tom, Rick hits someone's new car. Tom gives them a nice smile as he retrieves the frisbee.

On to Lake Catherine State Park for the night. Some groups are planning to return to town to eat. Tom meets with the ranger and comes back to report that the campground has showers - hot ones! The vans erupt in cheers. The tents are put up in record time (even Sheryl's and Ingrid's).

After making plans to meet at Safeway - half the group takes their showers and leaves for dinner in town. The rest fix dinner at camp and then ... ah! warm water!

After Dean and Joe improvise a fuse so the brake lights on the van work, Greg drives us into town. "GeoJoe and the Geosynclines" sing on the way.

There are 2 bars in town. Tiffany's looks good - but won't allow anyone under 21 in. All stayed at the Sawmill long enough to see the 2 old geezers get into a brawl. Some of the group returned to the more interesting Tiffany's. They had a super band - Joe gave them an A. More dancing. Did you know that the guys in the Geo. Department are good dancers? - Even Joe!

We weren't exactly as dressed up as the other people dancing were. We had on our cleanest jeans, T-shirts and tennis shoes. And at least we'd had showers!

Dean doesn't feel too well tonight - but he just loves pork chops!

We returned to camp at a reasonable time. Had to be careful to not step on Tom who was sleeping on the floor of the pavillion.

Did anyone notice Ingrid running around camp with almost no clothes on that night? The bathrooms were too far away to bother getting dressed --- she forgot that Tom was sleeping in the pavillion.

One of the snorers was positively identified this night. Jerry was the only one who would cough in between snores. Boy, was he snoring loudly.

Day 8 - Saturday, 3/22

Tom's alarm goes off at 5:30 a.m. Ingrid kicks Sheryl awake. They got up to take showers (hot ones!) - wow! Two hot showers within 12 hours. It was strange to return to a still sleeping camp. We tried talking loudly - but no one else got up. We considered pulling up tent stakes - but decided not to (revenge isn't sweet when it's directed toward yourself). So we just ate breakfast. It was fun to be wide awake and ready to go while we watched everyone else stumble around and mumble.

The vans are scrambled again - now we're back to the original groups - but in opposite vans. Finally we're ready to go - Tom tells Sheryl to remember what kind of fuse is needed to fix the van's brake lights, so she can remind him at the first gas stop.

Drive through Magnet Cove.

Stop to see some nepheline syenite with sphene. Next a Rutile stop (remember all the turtles in the pond?) No good crystals of rutile, but there were lots of pyrite cubes. Tom tells us about the time he stopped here before. While he was asking the owner's permission to look around, the owner's dog "pee'd" on Tom's leg. Tom didn't even realize the dog had done that until he returned to the van and some students told him.

Next stop - carbonatite. Everyone's been looking forward to this one. The interest is high - thanks to Carolyn.

Rick says he'll give Sheryl a kiss - for a drink of water. Sheryl let him drink water free of charge.

Joe crushes a bag of potato chips - while Ingrid's hand is inside. Maybe we'll trade him for someone in the other van...

A stop at Diamond Jo's Quarry - lots of nepheline syenite with amphibole and garnet. Tom says that this rock is so beautiful, Dick will have an orgasm when he sees it! Saw the very large xenoliths. Andy found a lizard - kept it away from Sheryl. Kathy "catches a few rays" - it's really warm in the quarry.

Lunch time - gas station stop (Tom's reminded to buy a fuse - which he puts in his pocket instead of installing). A leisurely time at the city park in Benton, Arkansas. After lunch we relaxed by laying in the grass in the sun, or by throwing the frisbee. It was a barefootin hour.

On our way again, Dean discloses that Joe talks about rocks in his sleep.

A stop to look at Womble crinkles.

Back in the van - drive - back out of the vans to see the Womble shale outcrop - crinkles and crenulations collected. Back in the vans, drive, back out of the vans to see ... more Womble shale.

Gregg says he wants to see cleavage - the kind in Andy's cartoon (you mean you haven't seen it/them yet, Gregg?).

Van 1 elects Joe to be the Compleat Geologist (he's already got the flies).

Snack stop. Joe doesn't eat Sheryl's ice cream today. He and Rick split the stick, however.

Van 1 keep changing their seating arrangement - no one wants to sit in front.

While riding around looking for a place to camp, Rick, Joe, Sheryl and Ingrid play frisbee in the van. Gave up after a few tosses - couldn't get any distance.

Camped at Maumelle Park. After the tents are up, one van goes into Little Rock for groceries. Plans were made to return again later, but the idea was nixed. Most went to bed on time for a good night's sleep. A few visited the partiers across the road. Suzanne slept in the van to stay warm. It rained at 3 a.m.

Day 9 - Sunday, 3/23

Broke camp and on the road by 8 a.m. (we're getting very efficient). A long ride ahead

A rousing game of questions and answers was begun over the CB's. Van 1 started out being lively - but they all zonked out later. Andy and Sheryl get comfortable in the back seat of the van.

Lunch stop at a rest area - record time - shortest lunch so far Tom says (I remember a few that seemed shorter). Heard it's 30° and snowing in Grand Rapids (BOO!)

Another stop for gas. Sheryl stays in the van - sleeping.

Suzanne, Tom, Jerry and Ingrid play cards - Jerry wins first one.

In Tennessee, Tom got directions to find Coon Creek, but couldn't understand the local dialect. When we finally found it, the property owner charged \$25 per van if we wanted to look for fossils. That lady got a "Z" and a torn up driveway (trying to back the van and trailer out).

Jeff finds a tick stuck in his shoulder. Bleh. Ingrid and Suzanne get grossed out.

More card playing in van 2. Others read magazines (both vans have now read and discussed that awful article in MS magazine).

Sheryl attempts to start a conversation. Rick, Andy and John don't talk. After 9 days of van conversations, I guess they'd rather stare out of the windows (turkeys....).

Another attempt to find fossils in Puryear, Tennessee. Down in the slippery clay pits there are lots of Eocene plant fossils - they crumble easily, however. A few are collected. It begins to rain.

Instead of setting up camp in the rain - it's decided that we'll drive all night back to GVSC.

A nice dinner stop - fish or Mac's. Then a long ride. It's raining and it's cold. Since Andy is driving, Rick moves to the back seat to sleep with Sheryl.

Van 1 tells some more dirty jokes (Tom still refuses to tell his "T" joke). Ingrid sings the complete version of "Roll me over in the clover". Jerry "moves with the song.

The van settles down to get some sleep. Water condensed on the ceiling inside the van drips down.

Ingrid tries to sleep on the floor - Gregg steps on her head.

A stop for gas on the Kentucky-Indiana border. One person must switch vans - no one wants to move from van 2 to van 1 (are we that bad?).

Tom makes Rick move so he can be in the back seat with Sheryl.

Low on gas in Kokomo, Indiana. We traverse the city 3 or 4 times. Dean finds an Amoco. Inside the station - Steve and Sheryl laugh when they see each other. Sheryl goes back to the van to get a hat.

A breakfast stop at Denny's, 4 a.m. Those policemen sure gave us strange looks.

Van 2 tells us that Ann was sleeping in the back of the van on top of the luggage. When she woke up she tried to get out of the back of the van (I guess she didn't remember where she was).

Back on the road and back to sleep. Tom stays in the back with Sheryl (did you tell your wife yet?).

Day 10 - Monday, 3/24

A stop in Watervliet, Michigan. Then, the last stop - Loutit Hall.

After the vans were unpacked, and all the stuff was in the hall - it sure was hard to believe that it all had come out of the two vans. The belongings were sorted out, and people headed home to hot showers and more sleep.

Jeff went home with his rock samples - covered the kitchen table, desk and dresser, plus had a bunch in the bathtub (some people have rubber ducks...).

There is still a bunch of stuff in the department - various lost articles (whose blue underwear?), kitchen utensils, and rocks. Joe's moldy cave clothes are still sitting around.

Classes have begun again (and someone asks everyday, "Is the journal done yet?"). Almost....

I think everyone agrees that this was a good trip (only positive comments have been heard). We all got to know each other much better - and we still like each other too.

No one except those on the trip will know the real Joe (he's so quiet in class). Of course, if they read this journal they might pick up a clue

The pictures at the reunion should be very interesting.

OK, now it's done. You can stop asking me about it, and I can get some studying done (ha!).