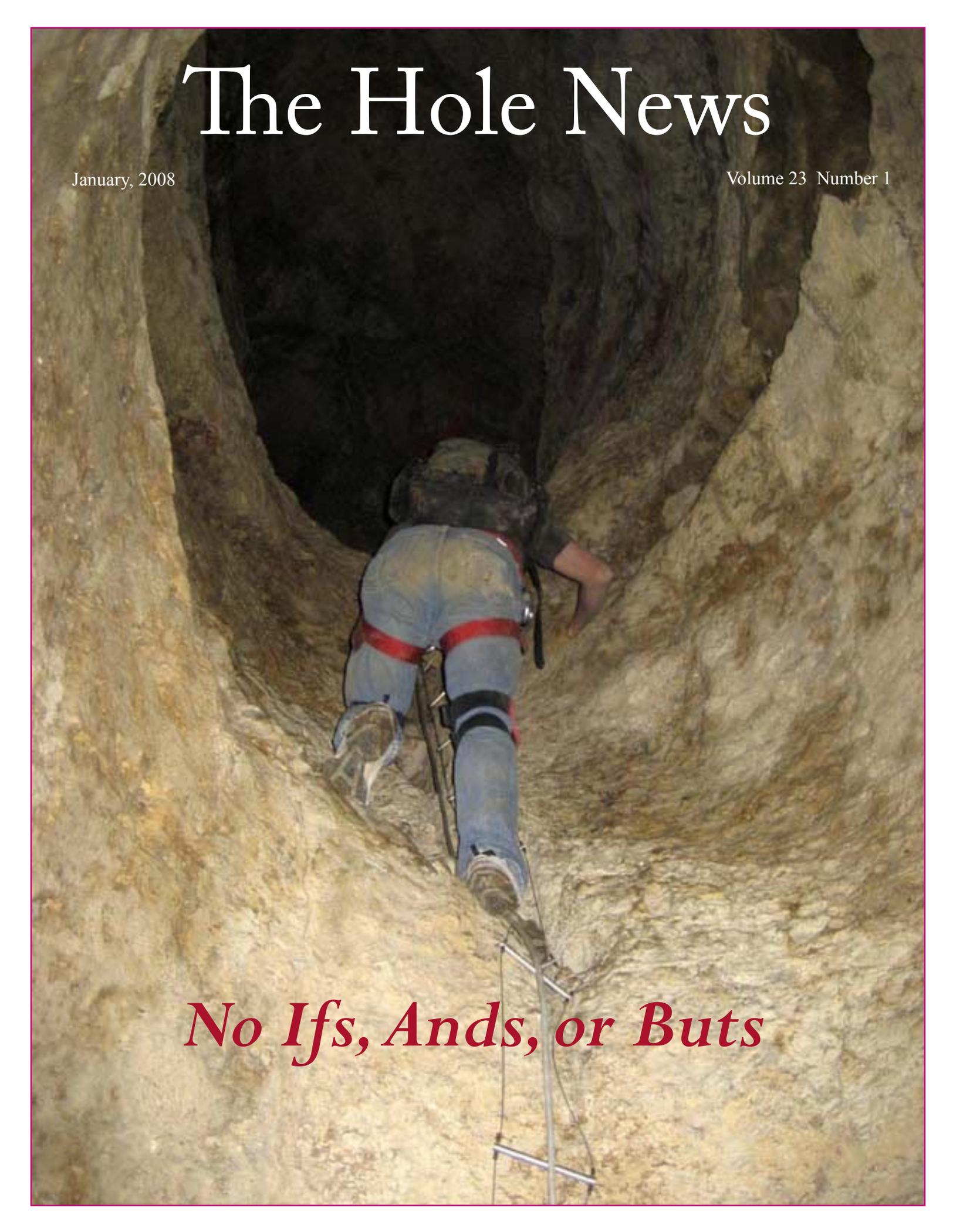


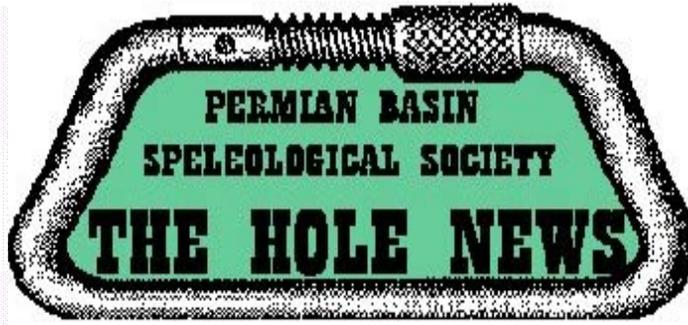
The Hole News

January, 2008

Volume 23 Number 1

No Ifs, Ands, or Buts

A photograph of a person rappelling down a narrow, rocky cave passage. The person is wearing a blue jacket, blue pants, and a red harness. They are using a metal ladder and ropes to descend. The cave walls are rough and textured, and the lighting is dim, creating a sense of depth and mystery.



January, 2008

Chartered in 1984 as the 300th Grotto of the NSS

Volume 23 Number 1

PBSS Elects 2008 Officers

The Permian Basin Speleological Society held the annual Christmas bash at the Caverns of Sonora Dec. 15, 2007. A good turnout of members made the trek to Sonora, to be met by cold, blustery conditions. But hey, it's December.

Ballots to elect new officers had been previously mailed to the membership. The results were carefully guarded and placed within a hermetically sealed ketchup bottle, before being placed in a secret vault at Fort Bentley. Security was tight as the voting results were transported to the Caverns of Sonora, to be revealed at the monthly meeting.

The officers for 2008 are:

President - Kerry Lowery
Vice President- Sharon Long
Secretary- Karen Perry
Treasurer- Barry Hayes

Outgoing President Bill Bentley and Vice President Jacqui Thomas had to be restrained as the sacred ketchup bottle was forcefully removed from their vice-like grips.

PBSS welcomes Dustin Gashette as the newest member. Dustin is a student at Angelo State University and a part-time tour guide at the Caverns of Sonora.

Once the meeting adjourned, a wonderful catfish dinner was enjoyed by everyone in attendance. When the feast was complete, the management of the Caverns graciously allowed an after-hours, leisurely tour of the caverns. The tour was the grand finale of the annual bash, as well as to 2007.

We want to thank the Caverns of Sonora for their hospitality in allowing us the use of their facilities.

Upcoming Events

Feb.12- PBSS monthly meeting at Murray's Deli. 7 p.m.

Feb. 9 or 23- Bradford Cave survey and Blowhole dig.

Feb. 16-18- Manhole dig and CRF at Carlsbad Caverns N.P.

Mar. 15-16- Orientation to Cave Rescue at Colorado Bend.

Mar.- Possible Lake Cave and Mirror Cave resto.

Apr. 4-6- TSA Spring Convention, Kerrville.

Apr. 12- Honey Creek tower repair.



2008 PBSS officers l to r:

VP Sharon Long, Secr. Karen Perry and Pres. Kerry Lowery

Photo by Bill Bentley



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PBSS January 2008 Meeting Minutes

by Karen Perry NSS 45977

New officers reporting for duty:

*President Kerry Lowery

*Vice President Sharon Long

*Secretary Karen Perry

*Treasurer Barry Hayes

*5 old members, 1 new member - Dustin Gashette and one guest, Samantha Cleveland attended meeting.

The scared ketchup bottle rang from the table about 7 o'clock.

The only Officers report was that of the money holder. We currently have \$ 643.96 in the pot after all the expenses of the Christmas party at Caverns of Sonora.

There were no minutes from the December 2007 meeting held at the party as Bill had not yet got them typed up. So those minutes being read got tabled until such time as Bill has them ready for us.

Bill forwarded everything needed for new Pres Kerry to send in the IO report to NSS. Kerry is working on it and should have it in by dead line with time to spare.

Barry will send out current member list via email to members.

OLD BUSINESS:

We once again batted around the idea of Tee Shirts, the troubles and woes associated with getting an order together. KP will get with Cowtowners to see what they did

and how much it cost them. Colors were also discussed.

NEW BUSINESS and ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Jacqui purposed we buy a copy of Carl's book and donate it to the Midland Library. Bill added we needed to be able to get the hoopla associated with doing an organizational donation. Motion was made and passed.

Talk then detailed our 25th Anniversary for "In The Hole" which was formed Sept. 1983. We got our NSS Charter June 1984. We are thinking along the line of a reunion to be held at TCR. Bill reiterated that all newsletters are available on line.

Beck Jones sent information about an NCRC class March 15 & 16 to be held at CBSP. This is a basic Non Vertical Introduction to Cave Rescue.

CBSP Project and TSA Winter Meeting will be January 12 & 13, 2008. TSA Spring will be at Kerrville State Park Camp Ground April 4, 5, 6.

No dates yet for SWR Spring to be at McKittrick Hill.

Man Hole Dig will be President's Day Weekend, February 16, 17, 18. CRF will also be at CCNP this same time.

February 19 for TCMA Deep & Pumpkin trip.

Barry will try to get a trip to Abyss. Jacqui will email Nancy to see about February 9th or 23rd for Bradford Cave in Rio County which will be a dig, survey or both depending on the attending group. Karen will see about a trip to Lake Cave and restoration work at Mirror Lake for March. All agreed we need to do a vertical practice so Kerry will try to get the Andrews Jr. High gym for the March meeting. If he is successful, the March meeting will be on a Saturday.

April 12th is the Honey creek Tower Repair trip with TSA. Kel will follow through with a lead close to Iraan on private land for May.

ESS Cave is doing OK. Ropes are in good shape. Kel, Jacqui & Dustin report ESS is wet & muddy. Sam Cleveland made it through a squeeze in the upper part of ESS and found more squeezes and small rooms.

Barry's birthday trip to McKittrick Hill was attended by Karen Perry, David Bunnel, Jacqui Thomas & Dustin Gashette.

Bill will see about calling County Commissioner to get access to Comanche Springs Cave.

Meeting closed around 8:15 P.M.



Checking out the Hall of White Giants.

Photo by Jacqui Thomas

PBSS Officers

President

Kerry Lowery

Vice President

Sharon Long

Secretary

Karen Perry

Treasurer

Barry Hayes

Newsletter

Kel Thomas

The Hole News

January, 2008

Reviewing

50 Years of Texas Caving

by Carl Kunath

by Kel Thomas

This a big book. Over 500 hard-bound pages of caving history make this book a must for anyone who has ever gone underground in Texas.

Carl has assembled hundreds of his own photographs, as well as those from other photographers in the state, stories and statistics into a well balanced look back on the history of Texas caving.

Being relatively new to Texas caving, I found the book to be informative, highly entertaining and inspirational.

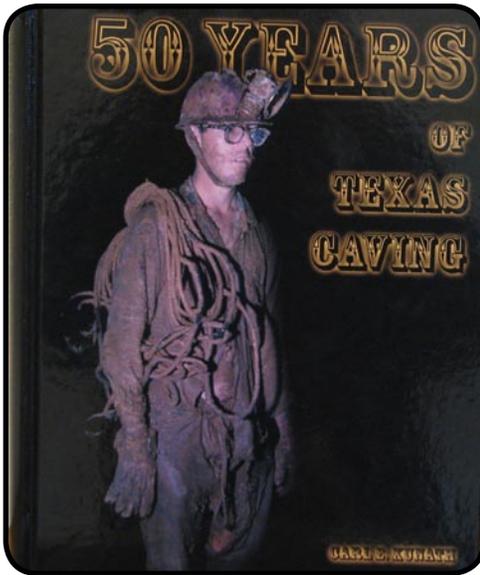
Whether we cave for sport, hobby, scientific endeavor or vocation (or a combination of some or all), it doesn't matter. *50 Years of Texas Caving* covers all the bases.

Carl pulls no punches in his retrospective view of the tumultuous years of the TSA and other organizations. But one thing becomes crystal clear. Regardless of the political turmoil, it's always been about the cave and it doesn't really matter which cave.

Going through the book, I was amazed at the number of cavers in the 60's and 70's still active and passionate about caves and caving. I can't think of many other activities garnering such love and support.

Whether you thumb through and look at the pictures, or start on page 1 digesting every image and word, one thing is clear. Any caver worth their carbide should get this book.

At least, that's my opinion.



ESS Cave Revisited

by Kel Thomas

On December 17, 2007, Samantha Cleveland, Dustin Gashette, Jeremy Dickinson, Jacqui and Kel Thomas took to the road and went to Ess Cave. The trip was an introductory trip for Sam and Jeremy.

It was determined earlier that Ess would be a good place to introduce vertical techniques to the three novice cavers.

Once we geared up, the gate was inspected, unlocked and the entry drop rigged. Kel rappelled first to move the ladder to one side and prepare to belay, while Jacqui provided rappelling instruction to Sam, Dustin and Jeremy.

When all three vertical newbies were down, and had gone down the second ladder, Jacqui traversed the ledge, inspecting the safety rope as she went. She determined the rope was still in good shape before joining the rest of us in the narrows.

We proceeded deeper into the cave, checking out various leads and holes to possibly explore later.

Once we had made it to the lunch room area and after a quick battery change, Sam, Dustin and Jeremy wanted to poke around more in some leads we had passed earlier.

Jacqui and I wanted to go up to the next level and check on the two ropes going up to the upper level. We pointed out where we were going so S., D., and J.

could meet us there later.

Jacqui ascended first on the newer rope, checking rope and anchors as she went. Once up, she changed over to the other rope. I went up rope next, hung out for a while before changing over to descend when we heard S., D., and J. making their way to the area we had agreed to meet.

I rappelled down to meet them, got them rigged up and after instruction they were ready to ascend. Jeremy went up first to where Jacqui was, changed over and came down. Sam went next. When she got off rope, Sam began crawling through small holes, finding more holes and small rooms. Dustin soon climbed and joined Sam in the muddy crawls.

When the intrepid pair finally emerged, I knew it would take hours to clean all the mud off the gear. Dustin had a glob of mud on the back of his helmet that reminded me of the Elephant Man.

By the time all five of us were down, it was time to start getting back to the surface.

As we got everyone up the entrance pit, I stayed behind to replace the ladder. By the way Barry, great ladder.

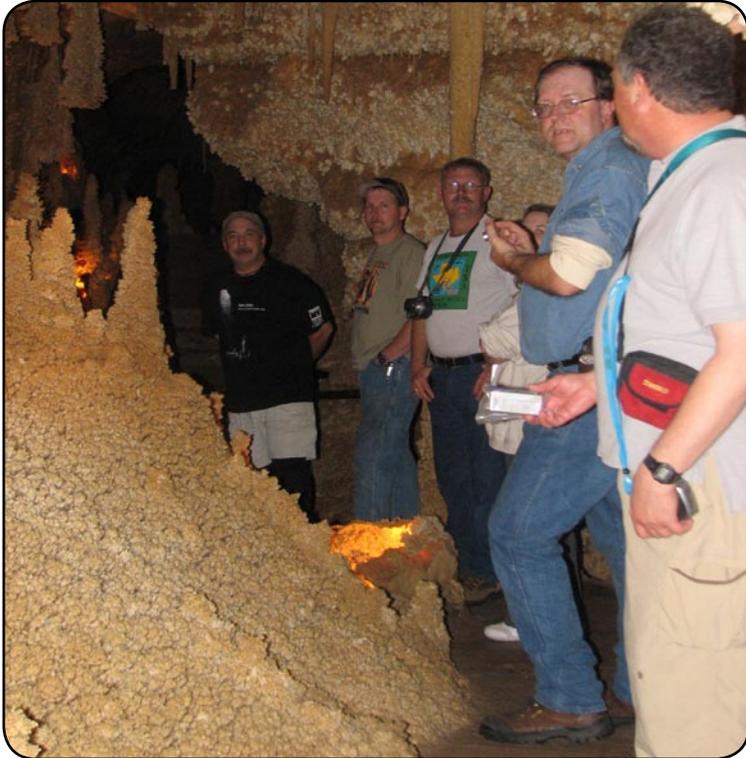
Once back to the cars, gear was removed and nasty clothes changed. Sam and Dustin returned to San Angelo, while Jeremy, Jacqui and I returned to Sonora.

A great day in a good teaching cave.

The Hole News

January, 2008

Picture This



PBSS members enjoying the Caverns of Sonora.



Thanks Bill for your hard work and dedication to PBSS.



*Horseshoe Lake
Caverns of Sonora*



*And especially, Thanks Deb for putting up
with Bill and the rest of us.*

Photos courtesy of Bill Bentley and Jacqui Thomas

*When all else fails, crawl in a hole.
-I. Kave Freely*

*Support your local grotto.
It's time to renew your PBSS membership.*