

P.B.S.S. SPYLUNK

JANUARY 1986

VOLUME 3
NUMBER 2

HAPPY NEW YEAR
CAVERS!

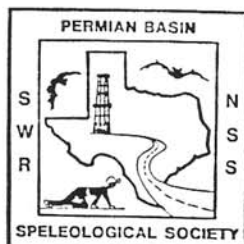


GRIECO
4185

WHADDA YA MEAN I'M TOO LITTLE TO
GO CAVING!?

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MEETING

The January meeting of the PBSS will be held THURSDAY, JANUARY 9, 7:30 PM at the home of 'Wild Bill' Greenlee, 919 N.E. Av. 'F', Andrews, Tx. Call Bill at 523-9550 for further information or directions.

NEWS OF NOTE

1986 PBSS SCHEDULE:

The PBSS schedule for 1986 is shaping up, and it looks like we will have a very interesting year, especially around June. Here's what we've developed so far (permits have been obtained):

JAN. 11-12: LANGTRY LEAD CAVE
FEB. 8-9 : HELL BELOW, STORYBOOK CAVE, LITTLE BEAUTY CAVE
MAR. 8-9 : THREE FINGERS CAVE
APR. 12-13: CAVE OF THE MADONNA
MAY 3-4 : 3RD ANNUAL BAT CAVE BLOWOUT AND SKIPPER ROAST
MAY 24-25: VIRGIN CAVE (et al. ?)
JUN. 21-22: NSS PRE -CONVENTION TRIPS, THREE MILE HILL
JUN. 23-28: NSS CONVENTION
JUN. 29-30: NSS POST-CONVENTION TRIPS, THREE MILE HILL
JUL. 12-13: OPEN

Contact Tony Grieco, Bill Bentley or Bill Greenlee if you are interested in any of these trips- you don't have to belong to the PBSS to participate in club activities! We usually have extra spaces on our trips.

1986 NSS CONVENTION:

The NSS Convention, to be held in Tularosa, NM is FAST approaching. Our grotto has the responsibility for both the pre- and post-convention trips, and 'Wild Bill' has got everything in this regard under control, but much work remains to be done. To this end, the SWR has scheduled their next two regionals at the convention site. These will be work regionals, and from what I



FROM THE VERY BEGINNING, BILL BENTLEY
SHOWED SIGNS OF A PROMISING CAREER
IN SPELUNKING....

understand, any and all help will be appreciated, so plan to attend. We would like to see a large group of spylunks show up to lend a hand! The dates of these regionals are April 12-13 and June 14-15. Contact Tony Grieco or Bill Bentley for more info.

VERTICAL TRAINING:

Coy Costen has informed us that we will be able to obtain permission to use the newly built fire training tower in Midland for vertical practice (that beats going to the overpass on I-20!). Anyone using the tower will have to sign a waiver, but as far as we know there will be no fee charged to either the club or its members. We will need to have some vertical practice sessions sometime before the Madonna trip, so if interested call Bill Bentley and we'll try to put something together.

TEXAS CAVER SUBSCRIPTION:

The PBSS has footed the bill for another years subscription to the Texas Caver for the Midland County Library. Drop by the Periodicals Dept. if you want to see it and keep track of how the other half is living.

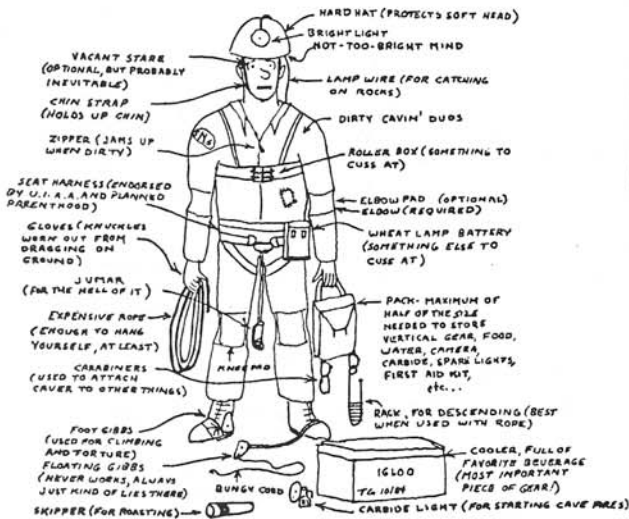
PUBLIC RELATIONS:

The PBSS display has now been removed from UTPB and will hopefully be reassembled at the Centennial Branch Library in Midland Park Mall sometime after the first of the year. Our thanks go to Elizabeth Smith of the UTPB library for allowing us to put up the display, and to Cheryl Metz for adding some basic caving gear to enhance the display.

CAVE TRIPS

JANUARY 11-12, 1986: The next grotto trip is to be to Langtry Lead Cave, near Langtry, Tx. This is a multi-drop vertical cave, so vertical virgins and those in need of vertical practice should arrange for a training session. As of this writing, plans are to go to the cave on Saturday, with Sunday left for other excursions such as Lake Amistad, Acuna, Del Rio, Caverns of Sonora, etc. Plan to attend!

THE COMPLETE SPYLUNK!



TRIP REPORTS

SOUTHWESTERN REGION WINTER TECHNICAL REGIONAL, Las Cruces, NM., Dec. 7-8, 1985.

Participants: Bill Bentley, Suzy Noldar (report by suzy)

The meeting started at 9:00 AM Saturday with the regional business meeting. Among the things discussed were locations of the 1986 regionals. Both the April and June regionals will be held at the 1986 NSS convention site outside of Tularosa, NM. They need as much help as they can get to prepare the campground for over 800 people. The largest projects that need to be

completed are road work, with installation of a very large culvert, and the clearing of land for camping. The Labor Day Regional will be held in the Robberson area (Coffee Cave) hosted by the Sandia Grotto. The Winter Technical Regional will be held in Carlsbad.

The SWR elections also took place with Joli Eaton re-elected to president, Mike Goar elected as vice-president and Jeff Lory re-elected to the secretary-treasurer position.

The papers presented were:

Interpreting Wild Caves (Matt Safford, BLM Roswell District)- Matt has put together a preliminary guidebook for Fort Stanton Cave. This is a great idea and will be good for highly visited caves. I hope that he will include a detailed map of the cave in the guidebook. Also brought up was the recent flooding of the cave.

Knots (Dave McClurg, PVG)- Dave went over all the basic knots and also included a diagram of an equalizing anchor system. This type of anchor system should be learned by all! Not only does the equalizing system apply less stress on individual anchors, it is also fast to set up.

CMS- Cave Mapping System (Steve Peerman, MVG)- Steve has written a computer program (version IV.3) for cave mapping. The program is written in Apple Pascal, version 2.1, and must have 128K of memory space. At this point the program displays line maps and profiles, but in the future I hope we see 3-D displays. The program is available for purchase for \$25.

Geology of Southern New Mexico (Dr. Greg Mack, NMSU)- Dr. Mack gave a good overview of the geology of New Mexico over time and how changes were related to plate tectonics. I was impressed by the number of interesting and pertinent questions put to him by the caving crowd.



BLM/USFS Land Swap (Buzz Hummell, BLM Roswell District)- I got the impression that the BLM/USFS land swap won't take place any time soon. If it does take place, it shouldn't affect our access to any federal caves. Buzz also told us about an airport that will be built next to Fort Stanton Cave. This new construction project will definitely affect access to this cave and to other wild caves in the area. At this point, nothing can be done to stop construction of the jet-capable airport but we can write letters to the BLM stating our concern about future access to the caves. Contact Buzz for more info.

Crystal Caverns Survey (Dave Belski, PVG)- Dave has done a great job spearheading this mapping project. A lot more work needs to be done, however. Dave is looking for volunteers to help map, photograph,

and explore this great cave.

The Jamaica Cockpit Expedition(Ray Keeler, Mickey Mouse Grotto)- Ray presented an interesting slide show on the exploration and mapping of caves in Jamaica.

During lunch and after the papers were presented, the NSS Convention was discussed. At this point, the convention seems to be well planned and organized. The only question remaining is whether the Tularosa convention site will be ready in time or large enough to handle the crowd.

The evening social was spent at the Four Hills Day Care Center. The crowd went wild over all of the toys (why doesn't that surprise me?- editor). The highlights of the night included a plastic cave obstacle course, an underwater cave video, dancing, and of course, good food, cheer and company!

Special thanks to Jeff Lory for opening his home to us.

AMAZING MAZE CAVE, Pecos County, Tx., Dec. 29, 1985.

Participants: Bill Bentley, Tony Grieco, John Hill, Terry Hill, Suzy Noldan (Report by Bill)

Why not? It had been a long time since I had been in Amazing Maze Cave and everyone wanted to go caving for a few hours, so, why not? And so we did. Tony, Suzy and I piled in Tony's Bronco II and departed Midland at 7:30 AM in the midst of a near-zero visibility fog. After two hours and flying-sliding through a stop sign somewhere near Crane, we finally arrived at the cave. We entered the cave at 10:30 after getting all of the gear and lights sorted. The entrance was still open (as I had left it in July), and a warm, moist flow of air came up through the cement entrance structure. Since we didn't know what kind of poisonous snakes or deadly spiders lurked just inside of the darkness, we unanimously volunteered Tony for the first descent. Then I entered and Suzy soon followed.

We entered the register room and signed in. The cricket population had decreased considerably since the last time I had been there. Soon we were all sweating as we headed for the section of the maze nearest the highway (humidity must have been 90-100%). After a few stops we all paused at the Hole Room. Since this was Suzy's first trip into this cave, we led her down into one of the many lower levels. Upon leaving, I made it up and out, then Tony used 'generic cursing' to help him get out, then finally Suzy slithered out. We then searched for about an hour for the AC Room, only to end up lost. We then decided to retrace our steps and go back to the Hole Room, only to discover that it was lost too! Then someone said something about someone else being in the cave with us and up popped Terry and John Hill.

A brief conference confirmed that none of us knew where we were- other than in the cave. By accident we stumbled back onto the Hole Room, and so, while everyone took a break, I went off on a systematic search for the Table Rock which is the entrance area for the Cake Mix Domes. I went down tunnels and passages until finally I found it- then the big question was: could I find my way back to the others? Luckily I had placed rock cairnes to mark my way back. Once I had rejoined the group, I rested and ate wheat thins- until a cricket crawled up my leg and caused a shower of crackers! We all then went to the Cake

and explored for a while, only to end up digging (just like the Haynes brothers) into dome after dome. Tony explained that the soft, moist dirt that I compared to cake mix was residue from the limestone breaking down in the domes, and that these domes would eventually break through to the surface. We did notice strong cool air currents in some places, and even spotted some animal dung in one passage.

After four long hours we exited the cave. The outside air was fresh, the sun was shining, and it had to be nearly 80°. Terry helped me shut the lid and rock up the entrance. We left aching, tired, and content. We then headed to the McCamey Dairy Queen for ice cream and fries before returning home. Tony says that his Bronco now smells funny, something kinda like cave...

MISCELLANEOUS

TIPS FOR WHEAT LAMP CAVERS:

Although this trick is fairly well known among PBSS members, it has come to our attention that some people who have access to the SPYLUNK are unaware of it. (are you paying attention, J.J.?).

If you want to extend the life of the charge on a Wheat lamp, you can virtually double it by removing the bulb, filing off the lowest (farthest from the bulb itself) stud and replacing the bulb in the socket rotated 180°. If this is done, the lamp will function normally at one switch setting, but the second switch position will put the filaments in series. This increases the resistance of the bulb and reduces the draw on the battery, as well as the amount of light produced. The result is that you can get well over 24 hours of carbide-level light as well as greatly increased bulb life, yet the full intensity of the Wheat lamp is still available when needed. Pretty slick, huh?

Those of us who use this modification have found that the 'low beam' setting is quite sufficient for probably 75% of the caving that we do, such as rope work, tight crawls, etc.

MORE PUBLIC RELATIONS:

Bill Greenlee has sent me a clipping from the Oct. 20, 1985 issue of Texas Weekly Magazine of an article titled "Hidden Treasures", which concerns Texas caves. I will bring this clipping to the next meeting, should anyone want to see it. The only thing in it that might be of interest to us is a list, by county, of some of the better known wild caves in the state.

SKIPPER ROAST:

What is the greatest fear a PBSS caver has? Is it falling into a deep pit, or maybe having all of his or her climbing gear fail during a long climb? NO! The greatest fear a PBSS caver has is NOT HAVING HIS VERY OWN SKIPPER FOR THE 1986 ROAST!!! But take heart, those of you who are skipperless- in some of the fliers that Radio Shack sends out occasionally they include a coupon for a free plastic flashlight (a \$1.98 value). If this doesn't qualify as a skipper, I don't know what will. Keep an eye on your mailbox for this spectacular offer. Even if you already have your skipper, save the coupon for someone less fortunate.

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BAT PAMPHLET:

The grotto has obtained 50 copies of a nicely produced pamphlet on bats, printed by Bacardi Imports. If you would like a copy, just let me know and I will send one to you. Before you pat us on the back for our intense generosity in providing all of these free pamphlets, I should confess that these pamphlets are available in quantity at no charge from Bacardi at the address given in the booklet.

On behalf of all bats everywhere, and those of us who love the critters, our heartfelt thanks go to Bacardi for providing this service.

Speaking of bats, the grotto's membership in Bat Conservation International has expired, and the treasury is too near to empty to re-up. Do any of you spylunks want to get together and foot the bill (\$25) for another year?

AUDIO-VISUAL MATERIAL:

The grotto has ordered audio-visual materials from the NSS for use at future meetings, starting in February. The following shows have been ordered, but due to demand we may get these in different order, or alternate programs. For now, the schedule is:

FEB. 13: THE UNDERWORLD
MAR. 13: SPELEOTHEMS
APR. 10: SAVING AMERICA'S BATS

If this works out, we can make it a regular part of our grotto meetings.

The PBSS SPYLUNK is the official publication of the Permian Basin Speleological Society, a grotto (chapter) of the National Speleological Society. Membership, which includes the newsletter, is \$4.00/year, paid to the editor (address on masthead). Material for publication is encouraged, and should be sent to same. Republication of material contained herein by NSS publications is encouraged, others may do so with permission of the editor.