

---

---

# PERMIAN BASIN SPELEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

---

---

January, 1992

## MEETING NOTICE

Date: Tuesday, January 14, 1992 (Note to Cheryl and Henry: This is week after next.)

Location: J. D. & Melissa's house, 4306 Ferncliff, Midland. Ferncliff is a semi-circular street running between Midland Drive and Wadley. Going south on Midland Drive, you pass Albertsons on your right. Next street is Wadley. Ferncliff is third street south of Wadley. Turn left (go east) on Ferncliff. J. D. & Melissa's house will be on your left (northwest side of Ferncliff), and has a black mailbox out front. See December, 1991 newsletter for map, and call J. D. at 694-4381 if you get lost.

Time: 7:00 PM

## JANUARY TRIP

Montgomery Cave is planned for January 11 and 12. To get in the vicinity of the cave, go to Sheffield, on Interstate 10 west of Ozona. Take Highway 349 south out of Sheffield towards Dryden. Go about 30 miles, until you see a green sign on the right side of the road that says "Pumpville". There will be a cattle guard and a dirt road going off to the left (east). Some highway maps show this road. We'll meet at the cattle guard at 8:30 am on Saturday, January 11. J. D. will mark the way from the cattle guard to the cave, about 15 miles, with flagging tape, probably yellow tape. Don't count on your odometer, as the 30 and 15 mile figures are estimates. You can camp Saturday night beside the cave, and if you can find the cave without the flagging, you can camp there Friday night too.

Montgomery Cave involves two vertical drops of about 80-100 feet each.

## SLUT JOINS PBSS

Tony Grieco, Guad Slut, has joined PBSS. Yes, Tony, an anonymous member got sick of your bragging about your GDI affiliation and coughed up \$5.00 for your dues. And don't even think about getting a \$5.00 windfall -- PBSS has a no-refund policy. Just as a man cannot change the color of his skin -- Just as a Boy Named Sue could not change his name -- You are a member of PBSS and there's nothing you can do about it.

## ENCLOSURES

If you have not paid your \$5.00 membership dues to PBSS, a notice is enclosed. If you received a notice and have not made any recent trips or meetings, we will drop you from the membership rolls if payment is not received. If you have not paid your dues but are still active (i. e., Tom Hill, Henry Dickens), we'll probably keep sending you the newsletter. However, one of our members plans to construct tiny Tom and Henry dolls if you do not pay. He will tear the limbs off the dolls, chop them into small pieces, and throw the torsos into the campfire during the Montgomery Cave trip while the rest of us chant. You may wish to consider that he did the same thing to a Barry Goldwater doll in 1964 and a Saddam Hussein doll in 1991.

Also, if you are not a member of the National Speleological Society (NSS), an application is enclosed for your use should you desire to join. Don notes that PBSS could lose its NSS affiliation if not enough of our members also belong to NSS.

*(Typists note: Suffering from Grieco Syndrome, I had put off joining NSS until recently. Having joined, I think it's worth it. Some of the articles in the NSS news are interesting, and they send you a lot of paper that's excellent for burning if you wrap it tightly with string. For me, joining NSS was a lot cheaper than buying firewood at Seven-Eleven.)*

## THANK YOU

J. D. pointed out we've been remiss in thanking Chuck, Walter and Don for their work as officers last year. They've certainly done an excellent job of making PBSS an active organization, remarkably free of politics, where cavers of all levels of interest are welcome. Chuck put in considerable hours obtaining permits and coaching new vertical cavers on his radio tower, while Walter organized a couple of the best trips we've been on. Don, in addition to being the person who organized the new PBSS, has done all the work associated with our finances and NSS affiliation. Thanks!

TRIP REPORT - CORKSCREW & HELEN'S - 12/14/91 - Don Carlton

WARNING. This trip report contains graphic and explicit caving details. The views and opinions expressed herein are solely the author's, and they in no way are endorsed by PBSS or NSS. *Caveat is qui legit.*

Getting There. This was my first caving trip in several months, and I eagerly set out from Midland at 5:30 am for Slaughter Canyon. I like the long route through Pecos and north to Malaga. I have never gotten tired of seeing the jagged blue line of the Davis Mountains on the horizon south of Pecos. The profile of the Guads viewed get near Orla also brought back many memories of trips past. If you haven't tried the route between Malaga and White's City you are missing a pleasant drive. The farm land, the Black River crossing and the big trees were a delight. I arrived at the New Cave parking lot a little after 9:00 and to my surprise J.D., Larry Gray, and Rick Day were already there. Our new president was running a tight ship! A few minutes later we were on the trail for Corkscrew. As is sometime the case, the trip to the cave held more adventure than the cave itself. Rick and I followed a trail up the ridge called the elephant while J.D. and Larry took a more northerly route. I always say that any day that you don't learn something new is a wasted day. In J.D.'s case he should have learned that if you try to follow the official U.S. Government map to a cave you may never get there. On top of a small rise which may be either the elephant's tail or a large pile of elephant poop we paused to catch our breath. Rick spotted someone climbing New Cave trail. He waived and they waived and started down the mountain toward us. I never could see the person but Rick said that he was going down the side of the canyon. Suicide!! It had to be Ken. The guy was covering ground at a superhuman pace. We continued up the side of the elephant and after half an hour we finally reached the mouth of what we hoped was Corkscrew Cave. A few minutes later Ken showed up with a big smile. No sweat. Not even breathing hard. We saw J.D. and Larry working up the side of the canyon toward us. J.D. arrived with blood covering his arm. He said that he had gone three rounds with a cat claw and lost.

Into Corkscrew. The entrance drop required some climbing, but it looked worse than it actually was. J.D. lived up to his position as club president by leading us down the entrance. At the bottom of the entrance there was a small crack and the option to branch down to the right. The cave log here provided a momentary diversion. It had entries from as much as three years past, but it was damp and in poor condition. We chose the right branch and slid down a wall to the lowest part of the cave. I didn't find the rest of the cave to be very memorable. We followed the passage around in a loop back to the entry point where the cave log was kept. After less than an hour we were all back on the surface. There were a lot of common house flies resting on the walls near the entrance. I have often wondered where those



things spend the winter. We ate a quick snack and started out for Helen's Cave.

On To Helen's. Today I learned the best way not to get from Corkscrew to Helen's. We followed Chuck's advice and made our way along the east side of the canyon. We had seen the entrance earlier in the day, so finding it was no problem. The lechuguilla was the problem. There were thousands of them to get around, over, and between. There was also a plethora of other sharp, spiny things to avoid at all costs. Take my advice and follow the trail down and back up to Helen's. J.D. and I arrived at the cave entrance tired and bleeding from multiple puncture wounds. Larry was having such a good time he wandered all over the side of the canyon; he looked to be near death by the time he arrived. Ken and Rick were fresh as daisies, of course.

Into Helen's. This was J.D.'s fourth trip into Helen's, and he knew where the secret tie-off point for the rope was. It was disguised as a piece of swiss cheese a short distance from the cave opening. Take it or leave it. No other choices. J.D. was smart enough to try to convince Larry to descend first, but since I had survived the trip over from Corkscrew, I knew God had picked me for bigger and better things, and I made the first drop. It was an easy 30 foot rappell and shortly all of us were at the bottom of the entrance. To the right of the entrance passage is a short lead which has some interesting stalactites. You can walk among them and it looks like you are in the jaws of some large beast. To the left is the main passage of the cave. J.D. called to me, "Hey Don, if you climb up here you can get into the top part of the cave and see some neat stuff. It is really a hard climb, though. Really tough". Did he expect me to back off? Was this a challenge to my manhood? Was there a way to get out of this? Rick, Larry, and I accepted the challenge and toured the upper passage. It had some pretty drapery and flowstone formations. The climb down was exciting, too. A good way to break something, but we survived undamaged. Back at the entrance we rigged up for the ascent. It took longer to rig up than it did to climb out. Rick free climbed out with no trouble.

Into The Night. While we were enjoying a drink back at the parking lot a charming young lady shared her delight in her trip through New Cave. Before we could really get into the finer details some sour looking gents hustled her off into their van and left us eating dust. I was getting a PBSS application for her, but I wasn't quick enough. We gathered enough firewood on the way back to Park's Ranch to have an inviting camp fire that evening. Chuck, Tony Jones, and Walter joined us later for some tall tales and cold drinks. Tony, an aspiring park ranger, said that he thought PBSS had the highest quality drunks of any grotto he had socialized with. Park's Ranch doesn't have much to offer in the way of camping comfort, but with the stars so close you could almost touch them, and a big camp fire, there was no place else I would have rather been that night. Sometime after I went to bed, I heard Noel Pando arrive for the Sunday trip to Wen.

Getting Home. The coyotes started howling early Sunday morning which is better than waking to the CW music on my clock radio at home. Ken had to return to Midland early. I went into White's City to call home. I found out that there were some things needing my attention, so I headed on back to Midland. Passing through Orla I remembered that J.D. revealed that he had lived there as a boy. That explained a lot of things. Plenty of time to muse about the sticky philosophical questions we left unanswered last night. Why can't people just cave for the joy of it instead of getting their egos involved? Why do people do such bizarre things in caves in the name of science? Why is the price of gasoline in Midland/Odessa higher than anywhere else in the civilized world? Troubling questions that we will have to resolve on the next trip.

**PBSS Newsletter**

Please mail material for newsletter to Ken Kamon, 400 W. Texas #1100K, Midland, TX 79701

**PBSS MEMBERSHIP**

Last Name	First Name	W. Phone	H. Phone	NSS #
Anderle	Chuck	685-3119	685-3119	31477
Anderle	Jan	685-3119	685-3119	31478
Bentley	Bill	694-7721	697-3079	21977
Brinson	Debbie	699-4081	687-4443	31906
Brinson	Will	699-4081	687-4443	31905
Carlton	Don	335-3265	687-4352	30417
Cargile	Terry		697-8700	-----
Coffin	Gralin	684-5548	682-1904	33471
Coffin	Kari C.		682-1904	33472
Day	Rick		523-9665	-----
Dickens	Henry	563-0421	367-5275	-----
Eddy	David			11830
Feaster	Walter		367-8253	31624
Fincher	J. D.		694-4381	1022
Fincher	Richard		694-4381	-----
Franks	Stephen	697-7672		-----
Glossa	Jeff	682-9731		-----
Gray	Larry	655-6957	653-3823	-----
Grieco	Tony		(505)393-5604	-----
Hill	Patrick		689-8347	-----
Hill	Tom	560-5065	687-2122	27888
Kamon	Ken	686-0720	699-7192	27723
Nance	Jim		563-5208	-----
Pando	Noel		523-9294	-----
Scott	Melissa		694-4381	-----
Seefeld	Cheryl	699-0396	687-5042	-----
Showalter	Ernie	563-1663	682-1700	-----
Wall	Denise	(214) 373-3755	691-0105	-----

**PERMIAN BASIN SPELEOLOGICAL SOCIETY**  
 c/o Don Carlton  
 1301 Daventry  
 Midland, TX 79705



Don Carlton  
 1301 Daventry  
 Midland, TX 79705

**CORRECTION TO PBSS JANUARY NEWSLETTER**

The Montgomery cave trip will occur on January 18-19, not on January 11-12 as stated in the newsletter. Other than the date, the plans are the same.

Don has obtained permits for Hidden Cave on Saturday, January 11 and for Black Cave on Sunday January 12. Both caves are in the vicinity of the Lookout Tower in Lincoln National Forest. Please call Don or J. D. if you plan to go. Plans are to meet Saturday morning at the campground past the Lookout Tower around 10:00. Black is a wet, highly-decorated horizontal cave. Hidden is an excellent vertical cave for beginners.

PERMIAN BASIN SPELEOLOGICAL SOCIETY  
c/o Don Carlton  
1301 Daventry  
Midland, TX 79705



Bill Bentley  
3815 W. County Rd. 116  
Midland, TX 79703