

October 2004

Chartered in 1984 as the 300th Grotto of the National Speleological Society

Volume 19 Number 9

THE MONTHLY PUBLICATION OF THE PERMIAN BASIN SPELEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Next Meeting of the PBSS

The next meeting of the Permian Basin Speleological Society will be held November 9th at Murray's Deli located at 3211 W. Wadley in Midland at 7:00 PM.

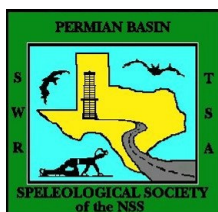
Our Agenda

Discussion on Dues

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Regular membership dues are only \$10.00 and includes one voting right, associate membership is \$5.00 and does not include a newsletter. Dues should be made out to and sent to: Michael Anderson. If you are interested in caving or even if you think you might like to try it, then contact Barry Hayes at 432-333-8856 or < cavelizard@yahoo.com >. If you are not from this area and some how through circumstances beyond you're control or ours found a copy of "The Hole News" then you should contact the National Speleological Society at 2813 Cave Avenue, Huntsville, AL. 35810-4431, or go to < www.caves.org >.

The "PBSS" Home Page
www.caver.net/pbss/pbss.html
built and maintained by
Bill Bentley



President:
Barry Hayes
Vice-President/Trip Coordinator:
Jacqui Bills
Secretary/Treasurer:
Michael Anderson

On Going Projects:

CRF Carlsbad Caverns: Expeditions usually occur on holiday weekends. Contact Barbe Barker < cloudcaver@pvtnetworks.net > or 505-687-4270. Or the CRF website www.cave-research.org

High Guads Restoration Project (HGRP): Upcoming events usually take place the last weekend of each month. For more information contact Susan Herpin at 505-457-2253 or < highguads@yahoo.com >.

PBSS Rock Haul at Carlsbad Caverns: PBSS on going restoration in the Big Room of Carlsbad Caverns. For more information contact Walter Feaster < wdfeaster@cox.net > or 432-559-3297.

Future Cave Trips, Events, and Projects:

October 16-17 Texas Cavers Reunion
Flat Creek Ranch www.oztotl.com/tcr

*****October 23-24 ESS Cave*****
contact Barry Hayes, cavelizard@yahoo.com

*****November 13-14 McKittrick Hill*****
McKittrick, Endless, Sand Caves
contact Barry Hayes, cavelizard@yahoo.com

November 13-14 Caverns of Sonora Restoration Project
contact George Veni, gveni@satx.rr.com

*****Denotes a PBSS Grotto Trip*****
*****Due to permit restrictions or other limitations Grotto members have priority*****

Remailers & Bulletin Boards

PBSS: http://caver.net/mailman/listinfo/pbss_caver.net

CaveTex: www.cavetex.net



2005 Grotto Officers

We had one volunteer for each of the officer positions , so no need for pesky voting.
The 2005 officers will be:

President: Barry Hayes
Vice-President/Trip Coordinator: Jacqui Bills
Secretary/Treasurer: Michael Anderson

Upcoming trips will be posted in the newsletter if time permits. The only other notification will be over the PBSS remailer.

If you would like to sign up on the remailer the address is:
http://caver.net/mailman/listinfo/pbss_caver.net

Our standing with the NSS is partly determined by the number of grotto members that list their primary affiliation with the PBSS. We have 16 members that are also NSS members. Your primary affiliation does not have to be with the PBSS, but if you would like to update the info. the web page is: www.caves.org/info/changeinfo.shtml
We have 7 current members on the list.

New Members

Please welcome new members

Steve and Brenda Franks

Out Law Caving- Some More Thoughts

By Walter Feaster

I assume everyone has read last month's article by Rebecca Lee on "Out Law Caving", so I have a few thoughts. Yes Rebecca you do raise some interesting questions. I happen to agree going into permitted caves without a permit and breaking into gated caves is wrong and against the law. Unfortunately we live in a society that demands we manage caves to protect the cave environment and protect arm chair adventures from their own stupidity.

Yes I too have heard cavers complain about favoritism and elitism, my response to them is get involved. Most of these government agencies don't have the person power to do what needs to be done in caves, survey, inventory, and restoration to name a few. There are many caver groups out there doing things for the government and private land owners. Work is involved with no pay, but you get into some caves that normally you wouldn't. So I don't have much sympathy for cavers who sit back and complain "I don't get to go caving", and doing it illegally is not the answer.

Any way this is not what I wanted to talk about. I think Rebecca has covered the subject of "Out Law Caving" very well, but I think she may have over looked one aspect. I am talking about the way some government agencies (NPS and BLM) and some land owners have promoted "Out Law Caving". Case in point. This incident was related to me by Bill Bentley (Mr. Bill) who was part of the event. This was back in the early to mid eighties and a few energetic cavers where digging in a very insignificant guano covered cave in the north end of Carlsbad Caverns National Park. Of course they had the blessing of the NPS to dig. Well their efforts paid off, they found going passage. Soon this former guano mine was renamed "Lechuguilla" and our heroes (I don't know who they where or how many diggers where involved) kind of got pushed to the side and most of them never saw Lech. Kind of a raw deal don't you think? Moving on to more recent times there was a big discovery in Fort Stanton Cave. Here again no one was interested in digging except for a few hardy souls. Well they hit pay dirt, going passage, big time. Well being good cavers they flowed the wishes of the BLM and delayed going in until they could survey as they go. Now I have heard both sides of this story and I don't know what happened for sure, if it was government bureaucracy or politics I don't know, but the end result was the cavers who discovered this new section are being pushed out of the picture. Oh yes we can't leave out the CRF, they have their dirty little fingers in this pie too. We must include everyone in this tale. Any way this has made some really good responsible cavers very pissed, and I am one of them.

So in recent years I have taken the attitude if I should happen to discover a virgin cave or passage I am going to one: cover it back up and keep my mouth shut, and or two: go ahead and go in and scoop passage, (see meaning below). Why? If you do not own the newly discovered cave or passage, more than likely you won't get to see it. So is this "Out Law Caving"? Well the said virgin cave or passage is not known about, so it is not permitted. It does not have a sign or gate on it, so what rules are you breaking? Well you could be barred from entering any cave on government land except the visitor trail at Carlsbad Caverns and then only by armed escort. For a once in a life time opportunity, I think I would go for it. Because we are asking questions here, my question is who is the "Out Law" in all of this?

* **scooping passage:** caver slang for exploring virgin cave or passage with out documenting or surveying as you go. Mostly for one's own benefit.

POST SCRIPT: For all you cave mangers and government pawns out there I don't think you will have to worry about Feaster the bearded barbarian coming and plundering your virgin caves. I am starting to feel my age now and I am not in the best of health. My cave vehicle has just bit the dust and for now I am limited to good paved roads. The odds of me finding virgin cave are about as good as getting my picture on the cover of the Rolling Stones. May be. May be not!