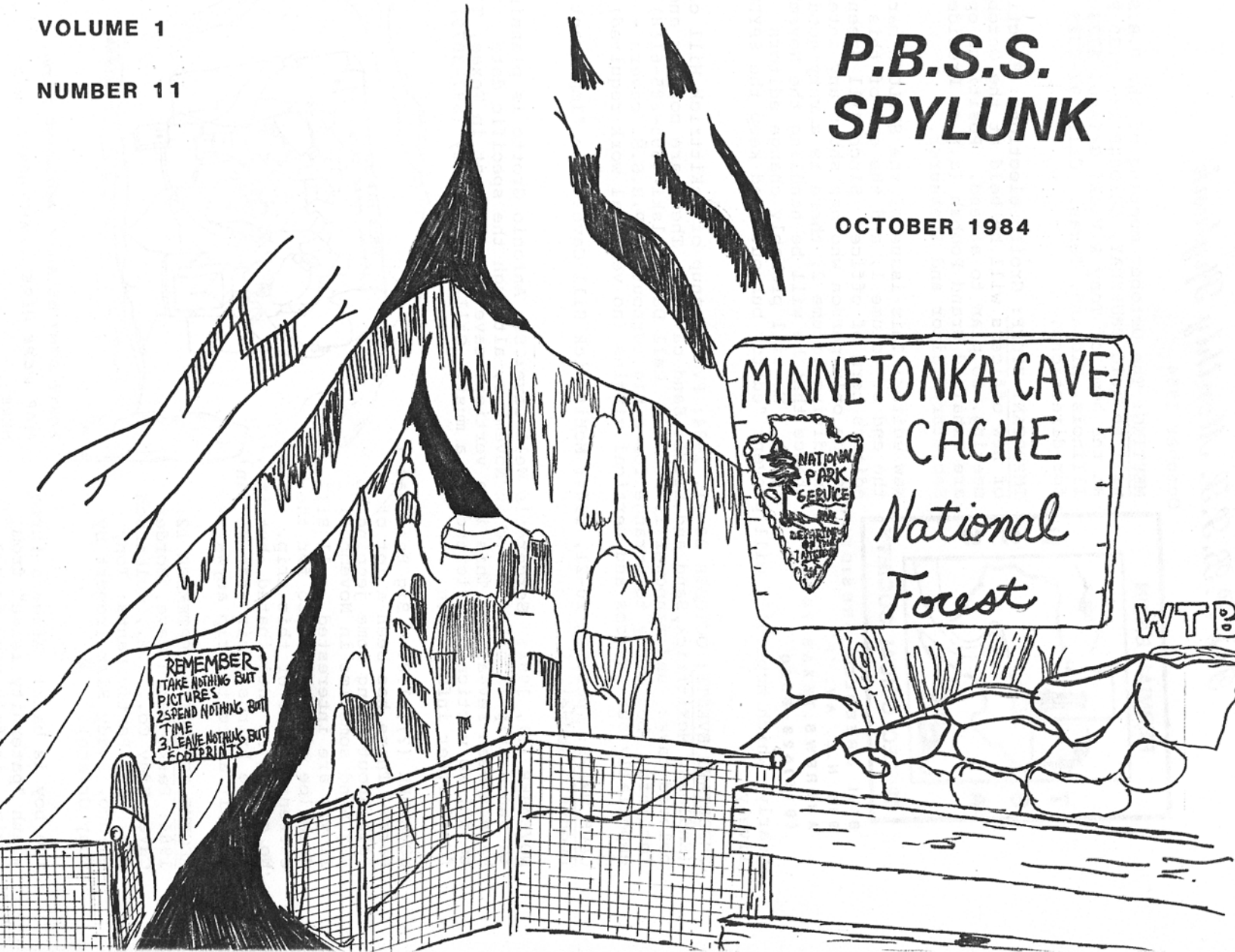


VOLUME 1

NUMBER 11

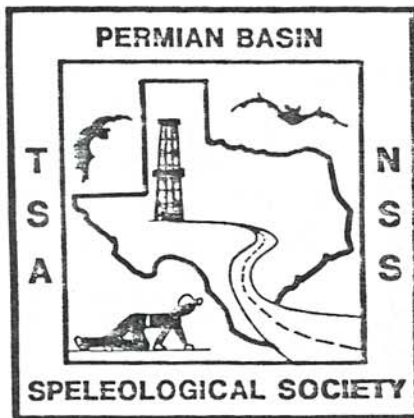
# P.B.S.S. SPYLUNK

OCTOBER 1984



# The P.B.S.S. Monthly Spylunk

October 1984



**BILL GREENLEE-PRESIDENT**  
919 N.E. AV. 'F'  
ANDREWS, TEXAS 79714  
(915)523-9550

**MEETING:** The October meeting of the P.B.S.S. will be held THURSDAY, OCTOBER 18, 7:30 PM at the home of Tony & Vicki Grieco, 4723 W. Illinois, Midland, Texas. Call 697-0323 for directions.

**IMPORTANT STUFF:** Grotto elections: Election of new officers will be held at the October meeting, so plan to attend. Positions open are Exalted Grand Poobah (a.k.a. President), Secretary/Editor and Treasurer.

**New editor:** This issue of the SPYLUNK marks the end of volume 1, and the end of this editor's term of office. Since Bill Greenlee is the only person who has shown any interest in editing volume 2, there is a very good chance that he will be handling the November issue. We will probably change editors

yearly, which hopefully will prevent "editor burnout" and keep the SPYLUNK lively.

**IMPORTANT EVENTS:** OCTOBER 20-21, 1984: PVG cleanup of McKittrick Hill caves (Endless, McKittrick, Sand and Little Sand caves). These are popular and beloved caves, and manpower is needed. Call Dave Belski (505-885-6168) for info. Let's try to arrange for a big turnout of P.B.S.S. cavers - especially our novices and vertical virgins (no vertical work required).

**CAVE TRIPS:** OCTOBER 20-21, 1984: McKittrick Hill Caves (see "Important Events," above).

**NOVEMBER (?), 1984:** Sorcerer's Well Cave: San Antonio Grotto is planning to run a trip into this cave in November, although the specific date hasn't been revealed. This is a vertical cave (the deepest in Texas, I'm told), so vertical proficiency is a must. Call Bill Bentley (697-3079) for further information.

**NOVEMBER (?), 1984:** Big Bend Nat'l Park: There has been a lot of talk about doing some jeeping in Big Bend sometime in November. If you are interested, call Bill Greenlee or Tony Grieco for the current status of this trip. No caving is anticipated, but if everyone brings their gear we can call it a grotto trip anyway.

**RECENT ACTIVITY:** SEPTEMBER 12, 1984: Parks Ranch Cave, Border Cave; Eddy Co., N.M., Culberson Co., TX. Participants: Tony Grieco, Buddy Sisk (report by Tony Grieco).

The boy is back! After a three month "paternity leave" from



LOST? DON'T BE SILLY. ACCORDING TO THIS MAP WE'RE HERE ... AND HERE ... AND HERE ...

dirty again! Buddy, who hadn't been caving in over a year, was equally anxious to get underground, so we took advantage of some slow drilling (we were both sitting the same well) and stuck our heads into Parks Ranch Cave to have a look around. After about two hours of chimneying and sloshing we left the cave and headed to the entrance of Sidewinder Well, mainly to show Buddy the location. Our trip into Border Cave turned out to be a brief one, since recent rains had left the cave impossibly slimy, and neither Buddy nor I felt in the mood to truly savor a trip to the lake room.

SEPTEMBER 14, 1984: Hicks Cave, Eddy Co., N.M. Participants: Tony Grieco, Buddy Sisk (report by Tony Grieco).

The majority of this trip was spent on the surface, looking in vain for Doc Brito Cave. In Carlsbad, everyone kept saying things like: "A four-year-old could find the entrance", but unfortunately, we didn't have a four-year-old with us at the time, so all that we gained from several hours of searching were mild cases of heatstroke. Undaunted by our failure, we made our way to Hicks Cave, where we spent a very productive hour in "mud city". Although we had taken this hour to rest after our labors at the surface, neither of us quite felt up to probing deeper into the cave, so we left "blood river" and the "aragonite forest" for a future expedition.

SEPTEMBER 15, 1984: Vertical training, Doc Brito Cave, Eddy Co., N.M. Participants: Tony Grieco, Buddy Sisk (report by Tony Grieco).

After breakfast on Friday Buddy and I decided to head out to the aqueduct outside of Carlsbad to give Buddy some vertical instruction. Although initially uneasy, Buddy quickly caught on to the joys of rappelling and climbing, and it can safely be said that there is now one less "vertical virgin" in Carlsbad.

Since we both had some more free time, we decided to make yet another attempt at finding the elusive Doc Brito Cave, after first paying a visit to Dave Belski for some supplemental directions. Although we didn't just walk right to the entrance, we did eventually find it, and since the day was cool and the sky overcast we were both up to exploring. All in all we spent the better part of three hours getting thoroughly filthy, and both of us had a marvelous time of it. Doc Brito Cave is certainly not the prettiest cave in the world, but it does have a certain charm all its own.



SEPTEMBER 21-23, 1984: TSA Old Timers Reunion, Wimberley, TX.: Bill Bentley and Dennis Haynes both attended the OTR this year. Bill relates that although the festivities were a bit tamer this year than last, there were a lot more naked women running around. Nothing of any official importance to the P.B.S.S. was accomplished, though Bill was asked to write a report on the P.B.S.S.'s first year and submit it to the TEXAS CAVER, the next issue of which is to be devoted to West Texas caving.



SEPTEMBER 15-16, 1984: Torgac Cave, Ft. Stanton Cave, Lincoln Co., N.M. Participants: Bill Greenlee, Mesilla Valley Grotto cavers (report by Bill Greenlee):

The Mesilla Valley Grotto of Las Cruces organized this weekend of spelean sport, and invited the P.B.S.S. I was the sole representative of our grotto, however. Approximately one dozen cavers attended.

Kathy Peerman led and navigated the trip to Torgac Cave on Saturday. I served the role of willing and able pilot, while Tim and Karen George and Dave Gose comprised the noisy cargo. Our fearless leader assured us that we were driving in the "easy way", in spite of washed out sections of pavement resembling the streets of Berlin in 1945. At one point Dave volunteered to wade across a bridge covered by a cataract before we ventured to drive across. He confronted the 40° drizzle in only his boxer shorts, but thanks to his reconnaissance, we made it across the flash flood waters.

Upon reaching the cave, we ducked in one of the three or four possible sinkhole entrances to this gypsum cave. The passages are mazes through huge breakdown blocks. Petite Kathy showed us some blind alleys through some tight crawl ways that we might never have visited without her guidance. We all expressed our appreciation loudly.

The large gypsum formations near our exit were very spectacular and unique. Calcium Sulfate's crystal lattice dictates the growth of bizarre looking formations. For example, the stalactites grow at many angles deviating from the vertical and branch randomly. The stalagmites have a rose-like form. In my opinion, this cave is beautiful in a hellish way.

On Sunday, Tim George, Joe Orr and I led novice Randy Rierson on a tour of Ft. Stanton Cave, our objective being to find the infamous "Roger" mud sculpture we'd all heard so much about. We made it to "20 steps" without incident. At the entrance to "Crystal Crawl" Randy decided to lighten his pack. He left a camera (no film), a belt, a jacket, a primus stove, a mess kit and a raincoat (sounds like he was ready for a major expedition!-editor).

After "Hell-Hole", we took a right at "3-Way Hill" and began searching for "Roger". We must have passed him because we spent a good while poking leads in what I guess must have been "Wheeler Hall". When I announced a promising lead, Randy informed me that we'd come in that way. "Oh, just checking your sense of direction...very good!" I replied.

On the way back, Tim found "Roger" and we all felt satisfaction in achieving our goal. We poked into "Trophy Room" on the way out.

All in all it was a very rewarding weekend.

SEPTEMBER 29-30, 1984: Deep Cave, Hell Below Cave, Eddy Co., N.M. Participants: Dave Belski, Bill Bentley, Tom Dillon, Bill Greenlee, Tony Grieco, Bob Hunt, Pat Murphy (report by Bill Greenlee):

Our group to Deep Cave on Saturday consisted of Bill Bentley, Bill Greenlee, Tony Grieco and Pat Murphy. We found the entrance with no trouble in spite of the near-zero visibility due to fog. In accordance with prior warnings about the treacherous entrance, we rigged a 200 foot rope to self belay into the cave mouth to the tie-off. Our "handline" later became the primary anchor after re-rigging. We made two friction wraps around a study rock

pylon with our 300 foot rope. I rappelled in first, wearing full ascender gear. After untangling the rope on a ledge about halfway down, I threw off the rest but did not hear it hit bottom. I then descended over the gradually steeper lip until I could just see bottom. The free drop appeared to be about 60 feet with the knot dangling three feet off bottom, however, after descending halfway down the free drop I realized that the drop was more like 100 feet and that the end of the rope was 8 or 10 feet off the floor. I returned to the tie point and we re-rigged, using the 200 foot rope from the outside for the friction wraps and joining it with our 300 to gain every available foot. This time we ended up with about four feet of rope on the floor.

The cave is a vast, echoing chamber with a large talus pile in the center. From the bottom of the talus, the gaping entrance appears to be a small window. Fog rolling in from outside added another eerie dimension.

Deep cave's decorations are profuse and pristine. They range from towering, draped columns to tiny soda straws. Much of the cave is very active. To me, the most interesting formations are Deep's tall, slender, arrow-straight totems. Many more than one trip will be necessary to see the wonders this cave offers.

That evening, everyone else returned to the Permian Basin, but I barged into Bob Hunt, Tom Dillon and Dave Belski's camp after dark with my Juarez radio station blaring. They welcomed me anyway, and we all went to Hell Below Cave Sunday morning. Dave showed me many parts of the cave I missed on our first trip last summer (see the June, 1984 SPYLUNK for that trip report-editor). I grudgingly admitted that Hell Below isn't really ugly after all. After the whirlwind tour, Bob and I followed Park Trail 201 in his home-built buggy. By then, the weather was gorgeous, for a perfect topper on an unforgettable weekend.

EDITORIAL COMMENT: Since this is my last issue of the SPYLUNK, I feel I should make some comments on the newsletter's first year.

Those of you who have been receiving the SPYLUNK from the beginning will, I hope, agree that it has improved greatly in the last twelve months. This improvement was only possible because people went out of their way to submit trip reports, drawings, cartoons, articles, poems, etc.-these contributions resulted in the SPYLUNK being a little bit more than just a simple newsletter (which would have served its purpose but would have been awfully dull). The SPYLUNK will continue to improve, no matter who edits it, only if the contributions continue to come in - you, the readers, are as much responsible for the SPYLUNK's success or failure as its editor.

I believe that the SPYLUNK is one of the most important things the P.B.S.S. has going for it. Our grotto members are scattered all over Texas, so the SPYLUNK serves as the one thing that keeps us together as a group, something even monthly meetings could never accomplish with a membership so geographically diverse. The SPYLUNK also functions as our link to the rest of Texas and the N.S.S., letting them know we're still active and alive, and at times providing West Texas cavers with our own forum from which we can make our views known to the rest of the caving world.

Thank you for all the help and support you've given me this past year.

Reproduced below is a letter from David Feemster, editor of the Abilene Area Grotto's CAVERS SCUTTLEBUTT, in reply to a letter I sent him asking for information concerning rumors I've heard of a new region being formed in Texas. Remember, you heard it first in the SPYLUNK, folks!

Tony:

There has been a lot of activity at Wild Woman Cave near Ardmore, OK. The clubs that have been interested in that area are DFW, Ardmore, Tulsa, North Texas Speleological (Wichita Falls), Abilene and Oklahoma City. These clubs don't seem to "fit" in TSA or South-western or the region that includes Arkansas and Missouri. Discussions have been held (led by Joe Giddens, DFW) and a decision was made to form a new region last spring. That is the last I've heard about it. I'm guessing that something official will happen before the first of the year.

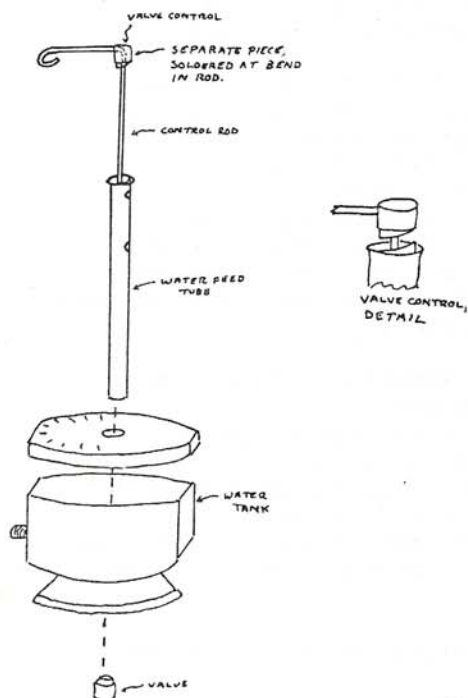
If you've never been up to Wild Woman, its a good cave in a good area with lots of holes. DFW is making a computer map of the cave which is interesting to see. Good to hear from you.

Good Caving,

David Feemster  
1709 S. 22nd  
Abilene, TX 79602

MISCELLANEOUS Cover: This month's cover was drawn by Bill Bentley, and depicts the entrance to Minnetonka cave in Utah.

Anatomy of a carbide light: I recently had the grave misfortune of having my faithful old Justrite cap lamp break. Being the daring soul that I am, I decided that I'd try to fix it myself. As a result, if it wasn't badly broken before, it certainly is now! At any rate, so that the sacrifice will not have been in vain, I have included a diagram of the workings of a Justrite, which I am certain are identical to that of a Premier. Lead solder was used throughout the lamp, making disassembly relatively easy with a torch.



The main surprise for me was that the water feed control was a continuous rod-I had assumed that there were two pieces soldered to the valve control at the top. Water flow is controlled by the mechanism shown, which moves the water feed valve at the end of the control rod up against the water feed tube (closed) or down away from it (open). I've been told that in some lights the valve control rod is threaded at the end so that the valve can be tightened easily, but in my lamp it had been soldered in place, and no threads were evident.

I hope the above observations will be helpful to some of you in the future. Had I known the specifics of a carbide light's construction prior to undertaking the "repair" of my own, I may have been more successful.

Harness sewing: I recently spoke to Ray Jimenez at Ray's Auto Seat Covers in Midland, and he indicated that he would be willing to sew climbing gear for cavers. Ace Auto Center also will sew harnesses for us. Both of these concerns use nylon thread exclusively. I have never had the opportunity to have any work done at Ray's, but Ace has done several jobs for me so I can vouch for the quality of their workmanship. Prices vary with the work done, but are, I believe reasonable.

Cave trips with the Mesilla Valley Grotto: Mesilla Valley Grotto is running two trips in November, to Three Fingers Cave (Nov. 17 weekend) and Madonna Cave (Nov. 24 weekend). These are vertical caves. Call Bill Greenlee for information or to sign up.

Kudos: Kudos for the final time to Irmalee Ingrham for typing the SPYLUNK. Both Lety Hernandez and Irmalee Ingrham have made the chore of putting out the SPYLUNK much easier for this editor by their willingness to do the typing. Thanks also go to Bill Greenlee for his trip reports, and Bill Bentley for his cover drawing.

What about the rest of you? You can be a great help to the future editor of the SPYLUNK by submitting your cartoons, trip reports, drawings, articles, etc. Send your contributions to: Tony Grieco, 4723 W. Illinois, Midland, TX 79703