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

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THE MONTHLY PUBLICATION OF THE PERMIAN BASIN SPELEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Next Meeting: PBSS

The next official meeting of the Permian Basin Speleological Society will be held on **Tuesday, October 12**, around 7:00 PM in the back meeting room of Murray's Delicatessen. Murray's is located at 3211 West Wadley, Midland, Texas.

Our Agenda:

Meeting

Will be taking nominations for Grotto Officers

Future cave trips and events

If you need more directions or information call our official contact person, Walter Feaster @ (915)694-1824 or (915)559-3297, or E-Mail: <waltfeast@marshall.com> or <wfeaster@caver.net>.

"The Hole News" is the monthly publication of the Permian Basin Speleological Society. Articles and cartoons may be reproduced by cave oriented publications that exchange newsletters with PBSS, as long as proper credit is given to the author. Please observe copy righted © articles. Items for this newsletter can be sent to the Chief Editor, "The Hole News", c/o Walter Feaster, 4307 Harvard Ave., Midland, TX. 79703-4847. 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 sent to PBSS Secretary/Treasurer, c/o Walter Feaster, (address above). If you're interested in caving or even if you think you might like to try it, then contact Kerry Lowery @ (915)394-4230 or <lowery4@crcom.net>. Or 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 Alabama, 35810-4431.

"PBSS Home Page"

<http://www.caver.net/pbss/pbss.htm>

Web space donated courtesy of *Bill Bentley & Caprok.net ISP.*



Future Cave Trips and Events:

8-10 October--Colorado Bend SP Project: Resumes activities. Contact: Terry Holsinger 512-443-4241 <trhli@sprynet.com >.

11-15 October--Capitán Peak Cave Dig:--Lincoln National Forest, New Mexico. Contact Dick Venters <rventers@aol.com>.

15-17 October--Texas Cavers' Reunion: The 1999 Texas Cavers Reunion will be held on the Flat Creek Ranch located near the Pedernales Falls State Park in Blanco County. Read enclosed article.

30 October--High Guads Restoration Project:--Contact Dave Jagnow 505-662-0553 djagnow@roadrunner.com.

*****6-7, November--Caverns of Sonora Restoration:** Please read statement in this newsletter by George Veni about Restoration. ****

*****9, November- -PBSS Elections:** Election ballots will be mailed out in the November newsletter and the returned ballots will be counted at the meeting. So be thinking about who you want as grotto officers for the next millennium. *****

20-28 November--Nine-day caving trips to Mexico: -Start planning now for the Thanksgiving Week Caving Break to the World's best caves. It's a 40 year Texas caver tradition. Do your own thing or watch the TSA Newsletter for details.

25-28 November--High Guads Restoration Project:--Contact Dave Jagnow 505-662-0553 djagnow@roadrunner.com.

24-28 November--(Thanksgiving) Carlsbad Cavern, New Mexico (CRF)--Contact Barbe Barker 972-594-1183 cavers@gte.net

Early December--Amazing Maze Family Trip & Cave Rally:--Sponsored by PBSS and TCMA. Watch for details.

Late December--Two-week trips to Mexico:--Start planning now for the Christmas/New Year's Winter Caving Trips to the World's best caves. It's a 40 year Texas caver tradition. Do your own thing or watch the TSA Newsletter for details.

31 December--High Guads Restoration Project:--Contact Dave Jagnow 505-662-0553 djagnow@roadrunner.com.

*****Denotes a PBSS Grotto Trip*****

Due to permit restrictions or other limitations Grotto members have priority.

TCR

The 1999 Texas Cavers Reunion will be held at Flat Creek Ranch 15-17 of October. This is the wonderful, expansive site that we used for 3 years in the mid-'90s and provides paved access, running water, a large flat grassy campground, and a wonderful beach and swimming hole. There is a burning ban in that area so no ground fires will be allowed except in the party area. Bring a stove. If you want to cook on an open fire you should have a fire pan with 4 inch or higher sides and set it at least a foot off the ground.

The "Finest Feed in the Caving World" will take place on Saturday night and is included in the registration price. Please remember to bring your own reusable eating utensils and to come prepared to take your garbage home. Recycle barrels will be available for glass and steel and aluminum cans--not aluminum foil. Well behaved dogs, friends, and family members are welcome as always, of course, but there is currently an energetic coyote eradication program underway in the county, and the adjoining ranches have poison bait traps set quite near the TCR site. Be aware that these traps are designed to attract coyotes by smell and do not discriminate between domestic dogs and wild coyotes. As sequestered dogs tend to be noisy, they cannot be considered well behaved. Leaving them home this year might be the better option. Sorry!

Registration will be a straight \$20 for individual cavers, camping included. A flat rate Family fee will be little more than the cost of 2 adults. As a service to Texas cavers and the TSA, your dues may be paid at Registration. Vendors of caving equipment and publications will be set up. As usual, our only rule is that there will be no other rules. The TCR staff is not in the police business. That means everyone should be on their best behavior and police themselves and those in their clan. We try to provide a safe environment for children and teenagers (and even adults) to spend a weekend with minimal supervision. Parents are reminded that children (including their children's guests) should be instructed in both the exercise of free spirit and acceptable social behavior that has made TCR the fun, exciting, and different sort of event that it is. TCR is a caver event and it is suggested that the random inviting of persons who are not interested in caving may not contribute to the overall caving spirit that the party is meant to promote.

Narrative Directions: From IH-35 in Austin take US-290 west past Dripping Springs a few miles to the brown Pedernales Falls State Park sign. Turn right onto the Farm Road to the Park and turn right again and continue on for a couple of miles to the Flat Creek Ranch gate on your left.

From points west, north, or south make your way to Johnson City on US-281 and follow the Farm Road to Pedernales Falls State Park. When the road turns into a county road, keep going for a couple of miles to Flat Creek Ranch on the left.

See you there.

"JUS' FOLLER THA DANG SIGNS!"



8th ANNUAL CAVERNS OF SONORA RESTORATION PROJECT November 6-7, 1999 by George Veni

The Basics:

Following the continuing success of restoration projects at Caverns of Sonora, this year's project will be held during the first full weekend of November. Remember that last year the project filled all 70 slots within 4 hours of my sending the e-mail announcement. If you want to be sure to get onto the trip, call or e-mail me ASAP to reserve your spot! Do not despair if you end up on the waiting list. We will again have 70 people on the list this year, and many will cancel due to work, illness, etc. I can't make any promises, but I've had people as far back as #70 on the waiting list get on past trips.

Like last year, this year's project will involve hauling rock and rubble out of the cave that was generated during its development by cutting paths for trails. This material was dumped to fill side passages or to create unsightly piles. Like many show caves, Sonora was developed on a shoestring budget and took some shortcuts to become operational. Unlike many caves, the owners want to undo the damage and are asking for our help. This time we will pick up where we left off last year and further clean up the Devil's Pit. This is the worse rubble dump spot in the cave; see the foldout map in "The Caves and Karst of Texas" for the location. Remember, this work is hauling rocks!! The work will be heavy and tiring. If your physical or medical condition is not up to it, please wait until a less strenuous project is planned before volunteering to help.

In return for a hard day's work on Saturday, Nov. 6th, the owners will provide a light coffee and doughnut breakfast, a hearty lunch, and a catered dinner with dessert and all the fixins' that has kept many cavers coming back each year. Also that evening, from 7 p.m. until 11 p.m., guides will take cavers along the trail to photograph the cave's splendors to their heart's content. The tour lights will be turned off as needed to avoid interference with the photography. For those not wanting to do the night tour, bring slides for showing in the Visitor Center. The next day I'll lead a 3-4 hour lights-on tour for cavers to get a few more photos and to discuss the cave's history, exploration, and geology, or just to tell a bunch of tall tales. Regular tours will also be available at no cost. Sorry, but there will be absolutely no off-trail access -- the cave is much too delicate. Camping with electricity and hot showers will be available at the cave.

Note to Cavers Living Outside of Texas:

Some of you have expressed interest in joining the restoration project. Since you have much more coordinating to do with jobs, airplanes, family, etc. than Texas cavers to come to Sonora, if the trip fills within a day as I expect, I will hold open 5 places for 5 days from the date of the project is announced by e-mail (I send out the e-mail notice after the TSA Activities Newsletter begins to reach people so those without computers will have a fair chance at signing on). It should be enough time for you to make your arrangements and contact me. After 5 days, I give those slots to the first folks on the waiting list. Also, since I announce this on e-mail only via CaveTex, and you probably don't care about the daily CaveTex postings, send me a confirmation of your interest in the project (regardless of whether you can come this time) and I will send you individual e-mail announcements of future projects.

(continued next page)

(continued from page 1) IMPORTANT THINGS TO REMEMBER:

The owners of Caverns of Sonora have implemented a recycling program. They will NOT be providing paper, plastic, or Styrofoam products for the meals. Please bring your own washable plates, cups, and utensils. The owners will provide a sink and soap for clean up, and appreciate your help in their efforts to be environmentally correct.

When you register with me for the trip, let me know if you're a vegetarian so the owners can be sure you also have something good to eat. Bring gloves, small army-type folding shovels, plastic 5-gallon buckets, and upright dollies if you have them. Carbide lamps are not allowed in the cave. Helmets will only be needed if you are digging in the pit. Lights will generally not be needed, although a pocket flashlight or elastic-band headlight may occasionally be useful.

Increasingly over the years, more people have been bringing their significant others to the project with the intention that they will not work on the project, but will visit with folks in the campground when it is over. This slowly got out of hand until there were more than 20 extra mouths to feed and several people who didn't work on the project went into the cave on the special trips. This is not fair to the owners or to those who did work. Even though people say they won't eat with everyone else, this is awkward and does not happen in practice. I must ask that **ONLY** project participants come.

If you **MUST** bring your pet, they will be kept in one of the few kennels available at the cave. For your pet's safety and that of other visitors to the cave, pets cannot be left unsupervised even though tied outside of your vehicle. Please leave them at home if possible.

If you contact me to reserve places for friends, please be sure they each understand what is expected during the trip, and that I must hear from you or them ASAP if they need to cancel!

The owners and I welcome anyone who want to come help, but please let me know ASAP if you have to cancel!!! One project was nearly ruined by no-shows and by cancellations that unnecessarily waited until the last minute to tell me. Also, do not contact the cave to get on the trip. They will only tell you to call me since I have the sign-up list. If someone at the cave says they will hold you a slot, they will be mistaken.

Directions:

To get to Caverns of Sonora, take I-10 8 miles west from the town of Sonora and follow the signs for 7 more miles. Speeders beware! The Interstate is closely patrolled for 10 miles east and west of the town of Sonora (mile markers 390-410). Below is a schedule of events. To reserve your space or for more information, call, write, or e-mail me: George Veni, 11304 Candle Park, San Antonio, TX 78249-4421, 210-558-4403, <gveni@flash.net>.

Project Schedule:

- Friday nite to Sat. morn: Arrive and register for the project in the campground (Friday night) or the visitor center (Saturday morning).
- Sat. 7:30 a.m. to 8:30 a.m.: Breakfast and registration in the visitor center.
- Sat., 8:30 a.m. to noon: Work in cave (self-serve refreshments will be provided in the cave at the work sites).
- Noon to 1 p.m.: Break for lunch.
- 1 p.m. to 5 p.m.: Work in cave.
- 5 p.m. to 6 p.m.: Clean-up (hot showers available).
- 6 p.m. to 7 p.m.: Dinner.
- 7 p.m. to 11 p.m.: Lights-out photo trip in cave. For anyone wanting to stay on the surface, a slide projector and screen will be set up in the Visitor Center -- Bring your slides!
- Sun., 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.: Free access to regular cave tours.
- Sun., 9:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.: Lights-on caver tour.

Feel free to reproduce this announcement in its entirety or in part in grotto newsletters, web sites, or by other means to share with your caving friends.

Three Fingers Cave

Allen Laman has been appointed project leader for Three Fingers Cave located in the Lincoln National Forest of the Guadalupe Mountains, New Mexico. He needs cavers to do restoration work in the cave and will try to schedule trips that will be more convenient for us out here in West Texas.

Three Fingers is a vertical cave and a quite extensive cave with several levels. This would be a good opportunity see it. If you are interested contact Allen Laman at (915)550-0910 or <ilove2cave@msn.com>.

Reminders:

At our October meeting we will be taking **nominations for PBSS grotto officers**, elections in November. Be thinking of who you want for your grotto officers.

The PBSS Treasurer is accepting **grotto dues for next year**. Dues are \$10 and make checks payable to Walter Feaster.

If anyone needs a **map to TCR**, contact Walter Feaster and I will get one to you. I did not have time or room to print it here.

Texas Cave Rescue

The TSA Cave Rescue emergency number is still:
1-800-692-0234

This number will work in the U.S.. But the

Mexico Cave Rescue

number has changed Area Codes. again.

001-956-686-0234

From Mexico dial direct or call collect (*Por Cobrar* in Spanish)! These are the 24-hour numbers for Kreidler Funeral Home in McAllen, Tx. Ask for **Cave Rescue** and John Kreidler. Be persistent!

In the **Carlsbad, New Mexico** area, first try:

911

