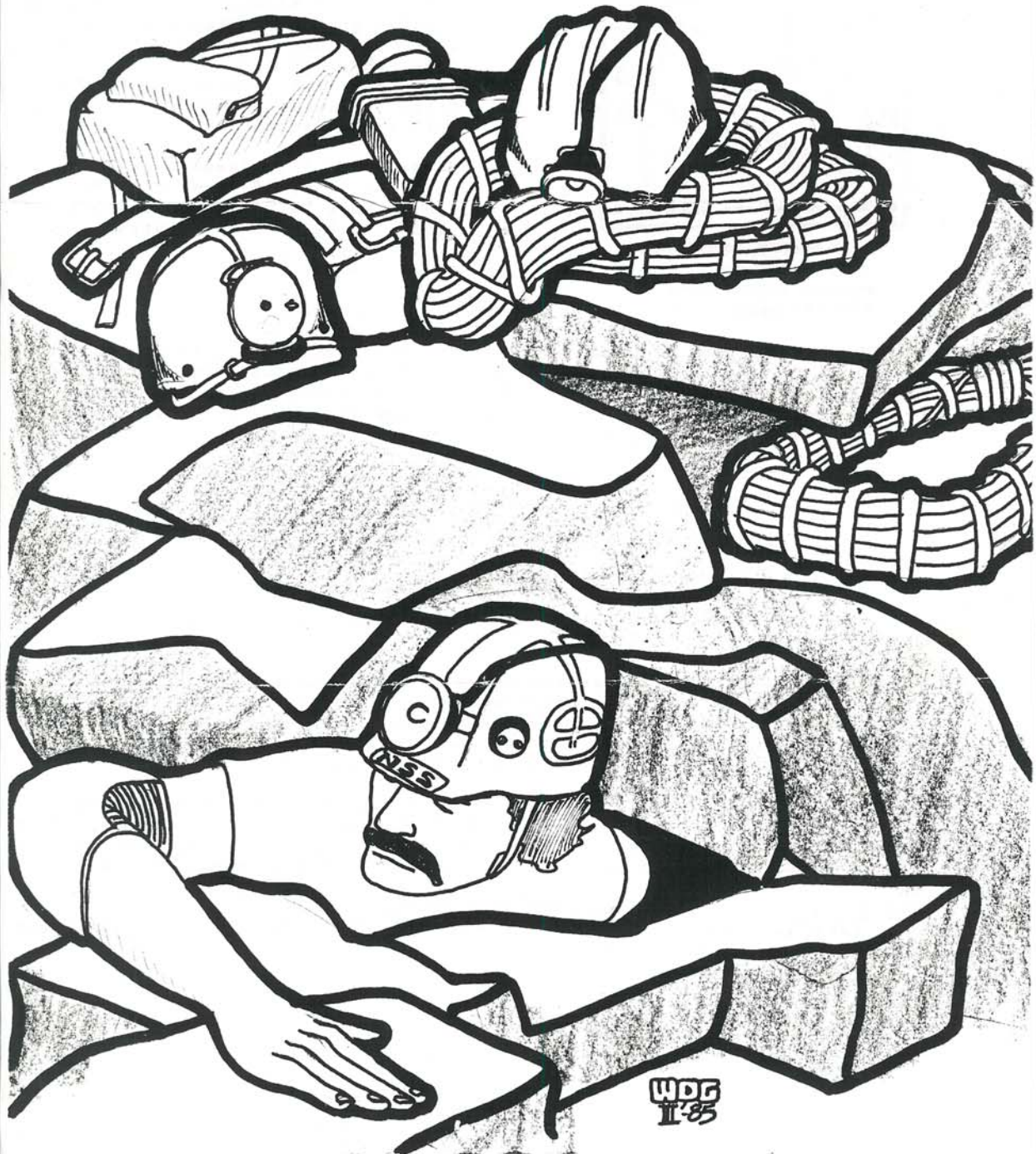


PBSS SPYLUNK

Volume II Number 5

March, 1985



The P.B.S.S. Monthly Spylunk



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MEETING: The March meeting is scheduled to be at Terry Hill's residence in Midland. As usual, our regular grotto meeting night is the third Thursday of the month- in this case, the 21st. Meetings begin at 7:00 PM. First priority for cave trips requiring permits is given to active participants.

Cover Art: This issue's cover illustrates PBSS caver Bill Bentley doing what he does the very best- This is the breakdown entrance to Troll Cave.

COMING ATTRACTIONS: Our next major outing and downing will be in the Guads once again. This time we will attempt to locate and explore the caves of Pink Ridge. My farmer's almanac assures us of having glorious weather. Plan to attend the April grotto meeting on Thursday, April 18 for details.

APR 20 & 21 The Pinks (Horizontal)

MAY Powell (aka Silver Mine Creek)

JUN 15 & 16 Hell Below, Black (Horizontal and vertical)

JUL 20 & 21 Virgin (Vertical)...but not for vertical virgins

SWR SPRING REGIONAL: The Mesilla Valley Grotto is hosting this event in the Chiricahua Mountains of Eastern Arizona. The action begins Friday evening, March 29th and continues through the weekend. Some heavy duty caving is sure to be among the many activities. For additional info and directions, contact Bill Greenlee.

PUBLIC RELATIONS: The PBSS photo display is now set up in the Andrews County Library. We are attempting to educate the public concerning spelean matters and are also promoting the NSS by distributing membership application forms. Drop by to see it if you have a chance.

Grotto Patches: Embroidered PBSS logo patches are available through Tony (see letterhead above for address). They make good patches for covering the rips in your caving duds.

TRIP REPORT:

February 16 & 17, 1985 Cave of the Madonna and a modest new discovery
Eddy County, New Mexico. Participants- Bill Bentley, Bill Greenlee, Tony
Grieco. (Report by Tony).

What a magnificent weekend for caving it turned out to be. We especially appreciated the beautiful weather because the previous month's grotto trip had to be cancelled due to a blizzard (of all things).

The hike to the cave was one of the most pleasant we've had in a long time. Thanks to Tom Dillon's detailed instructions and Bill Greenlee's incomparable sense of direction, we found Madonna immediately (although we were tempted to keep looking even after we found the cave, we remained in control of ourselves this time).

The maze leading to the first drop was navigated easily (Tom's directions here were to "keep looking behind you and see if it looks like the way out"-ed.) and the tie-off made.

The first drop in Madonna is fantastic, to say the least. It had been some time since any of us has been on rope. That plus knowledge of the recent accident on this same drop made for more-than-usually nervous (and cautious) cavers. As I stared through the crack leading into the main chamber, I was impressed by the profound blackness of it. Even shining the Wheat lamp straight down through it revealed no trace of the bottom. I continued descending- then, in an instant, even the walls were gone. For a moment, all there was in the whole world was the rope and the darkness.

Soon, everyone was on bottom and the next several hours were spent exploring the pristine beauty of this monstrous chamber. The climb out, though vexed by a few muscle cramps, was routine. All of us exited the cave to catch the remainder of a magnificent day.



During the Hike back, Bill Greenlee and I stumbled upon what appeared to be a fresh sinkhole. We poked our heads into this hole, and decided that it looked promising enough to forego the planned Sunday trip to Three Fingers. It turned out to be an unstable little grubhole and didn't go far, but being our first discovery, we're proud of it. We decided to name it "Spylunk Cave". After noting its location on our permit, we went back to out trucks. The rest of the day was spent four-wheeling and just generally killing time before going home to the Permian Basin.

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