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Next Meeting: PBSS

The next official meeting of the Permian Basin Speleological Society will be held on **Tuesday, May 9**, around 7:00 P.M. in the back meeting room of Murray's Delicatessen. Murray's is located at 3211 West Wadley, Midland, Texas.

Our Agenda: Meeting

Future Cave Expeditions

We now have Mass Quantities of Texas Bat Stickers!



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 Editor, "The Hole News", c/o Walter Feaster, 4307 Harvard Ave., Midland, TX. 79703. 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@rcrom.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 AL, 35810-4431, or <www.caves.org/defaultjs.htm>.

"PBSS Home Page"

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

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



Future Cave Trips, Events, and Projects:

***20 May - PBSS Rock Hauling @ CACA: Contact Ruel Metcalf.

27-29 May- - SWR Memorial Day Regional: Details later.

3 June - Possible PBSS Rock Hauling @ CACA: Contact Ruel Metcalf.

12-16 June--CRF Restoration Field Camp @ Carlsbad Caverns:

The Cave Research Foundation in association with the National Park Service and the NSS, is sponsoring a week long restoration field camp at Carlsbad Caverns. If you are interested contact Bill Bentley at (915) 697-3079 or <caver@caver.net>.

26-30 June-- NSS Convention: This year's convention is to be held in Elkins, West Virginia. If you register before May 1st, you can save \$15 off your registration fee! Registration information can be found online at <<http://www.caves.org/events/nss2000>>. You can contact Kim Kehs at (215)563-8153 or e-mail <edandkim@easy-pages.com>.

21-22 October-- Texas Caver Reunion: Place to be announced.

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

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

On Going Projects:

CRF- -Carlsbad Caverns: Expeditions usually occur on holiday weekends. Contact Barbe Barker (972)594-1183 or <cavers@gte.net>. Or possibly CRF website -www.cave-research.org.

High Guads Restoration Project (HGRP): Upcoming events will take place the last weekend of each month. For more info contact Dave Yagnow at <djagnow@cybermesa.com>.

Lincoln National Forest-Capitan Peak Study Area (LNF-CPSA):

April 29- May 5 and October 7-13. Ridge walking and cave survey. Contact Dick Venters at <rventers@aol.com>. Everyone welcome.

Fort Stanton Bat Cave Dig (FSBCD): Do you dig caves? Here is your chance to find new passages. Tentative dates: March 24-26, May 26-29, June 30- July 5, August 4-6, and September 1-4. Contact John Corcoran III at <john_j_corcoran_iii@msn.com> or Dick Venters at <rventers@aol.com>.

PBSS Rock Hauling At Carlsbad Caverns: PBSS on going restoration in the Big Room of Carlsbad Caverns. Lots of fun. Tentative dates are: March 11, June 3, September 9, and December 2. Reserve a spot now, they are going fast. Contact Ruel Metcalf at (915)263-4890 or <ruelgto@webtv.net>. **



Confused About What To Call Carlsbad Cavern?

Many people are confused about the name of this famous cave and its surrounding land in the Southeastern corner of New Mexico. Previously known as the Bat Cave, the Big Cave, and Carlsbad Cave National Monument, Carlsbad Caverns National Park which was designated in 1930 is the current handle.

The name of the small town of Carlsbad has its roots beginning in 1370 AD. Karlov IV of Bohemia while hunting one day with his dogs discovered a thermal spring which was soon named "Karlsbad," meaning, "Karl's bath." Water from the spring gained popularity as it proved effective as a curative for illnesses of the digestive system. In the 18th and 19th centuries, this spa was visited by royalty from many regions of Europe as its popularity peaked and reputation spread.

In 1888, the town of Eddy was named after a financier who had a great deal of economical and political power in the area. A study of a spring in the town of Eddy found many similarities to the spring in Carlsbad. To draw people to the town of Eddy as suggested by another financier Robert Tansill who overpowered Charles Eddy, the name was ineffectively changed to Carlsbad in 1899.

When a huge cave nearby Carlsbad was rediscovered in later times and popularity of the cave increased, it was named after Carlsbad in another attempt by town's people to encourage visitation. The rest is history.

Although people have been visiting this cave since the turn of the century, there is still some confusion about what to call it. When writing or talking about only the cave, many people

refer to the park as the cave when in fact the park encompasses more than 40,000 acres. Also, people make the mistake of calling the cave itself "Carlsbad Caverns" suggesting that the cave consists of many caves. To call the cave or the park "Carlsbad Caverns" is grammatically incorrect but generally accepted.

The appellation of the big hole in the ground which contains the Main Corridor, the Big Room, and many other cave rooms and passages currently totaling around 30 miles and unknown to connect to any other caves is Carlsbad Cavern. When talking about the land area of the park and its many caves which tend to be the main attractions of the park, the name should be used as Carlsbad Caverns National Park with the plural "caverns" referring to the numerous caves in the park. In other words, the cave is Carlsbad Cavern. The park is Carlsbad Caverns National Park.

In addition, the word "cavern" is often mispronounced. The last syllable should sound like the word "um" not like the word "wren." And by the way, the difference between a cave and a cavern are the letters "R" and "N." Typically the word "cavern" is used for larger caves but the words are synonymous. Perhaps this is why Carlsbad Cave National Monument was changed to Carlsbad Caverns National Park. Hopefully this clears up some confusion and misunderstanding but is not set in stone because words just like the times have been known to change.

Submitted by Rebecca Lee

Mojave Desert Caving

In December of 1999, Tom Kaler and I visited three caves buried beneath the shroud of the East Mojave Desert of Southeastern California. The very idea of caving in a desert is somewhat over run by the idea of caving amid sand dunes and sidewinders but on the contrary. The Mojave Desert can almost be a sister to the Chihuahuan (I'm not talking about the Taco Bell dog either).

The Chihuahuan Desert of New Mexico where the majestic Guadalupe cradle some of the most beautiful caves in the world mirrors the Mojave in environment, plants, animals, and rocks. However, the beautiful caves are lacking. Don't get me wrong, the Mojave has caves but they're no where near the caliber of the Chihuahuan. After caving in the Chihuahuan, caving in the Mojave is a nostalgic experience. It takes me back to caving in the small caves of Texas. You know- those caves you can hardly squeeze your body into but you'll do anything for the opportunity.

We found Egg Cave after a short hike up canyon from the Vulcan Mine. You really can't miss it as long as you followed the right drainage. A few hundred feet up the canyon wall, a dark recess marked its location. We lost the cave several times on the climb. It proved deviously elusive as if to tease cavers. But after a little persistent searching and cussing, we found it.

Rumor has it that a huge, bird egg sat at the cave's entrance for many years hence the name but there was no egg when we arrived. Instead, we found a cave with a blackened ceiling and red marked walls that went back maybe 50 feet. A few ancient artifacts like woven yucca mats and other minuscule fibers scattered the ashy floor sparking enchanting ideas of Native America.

Looking across canyon from Egg Cave, Papoose Cave screams for attention. Once again, it's another dark hole in the canyon wall that can't be missed. When we reached Papoose Cave, we were quite surprised at the booty. We had expected it to be similar to Egg Cave but it wasn't. This cave went back a hundred feet or so into actual total darkness and it had some formations. But I think the neatest thing about Papoose is the pictograph at the entrance. It's like a cartoon child with its legs and arms outstretched demanding attention from anyone daring to penetrate the foregoing darkness. Isn't that just like a child?

A few days and miles later, we found Cima Cave. This is really a lava tube. It was the first one I had ever visited so I was excited. A homemade ladder plunged 10 feet into the first room. Here, "lavacicles" draped the walls and black, porous rocks littered the dusty floor. The tube has about 6 collapsed entrances creating a corridor with many skylights. Someone had dug one end of the chamber in obvious hopes of ongoing passage but it appears that the hopes were stumped after 6 or 7 feet. The tube is about 200 feet long but is choked at the other end by a "tube-in." To see the other side, you have to climb out of the tube and walk over to another sink entrance. Tom found a bat in that other entrance but that was all. It was a short but interesting experience and it left me thinking about other lava tubes in the country and about how interesting they may be. I wonder- is someone who visits lava tubes called "a laver or lava tuber?"

That's what Tom and I have found so far in the East Mojave. Small but jam-packed with interesting facets. I relish the opportunity to see them because just when you think there's nothing worth seeing, there is and sometimes it's like nothing you've ever seen. Does that make sense? If not, come see the caves of the Mojave and it will.

-Rebecca Lee



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