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Contact the editor @ (915)559-3297 after 8 p.m. Fax line and voice mail @ (915)694-1824, any time. E-mail: <waltfeast@marshall.com>.

"The Hole News" is the monthly publication of the Permian Basin Speleological Society. Articles and cartoons maybe reproduced by cave oriented publications that exchange newsletters with PBSS, as long as proper credit is given to the author. Items for this newsletter can be sent to the Chief Editor, "The Hole News", c/o Walter Feaster, 4307 Harvard Ave., Midland, Texas 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 Treasurer / Secretary, c/o Walter Feaster, 4307 Harvard Ave., Midland, Texas 79703-4847. If you're interested in caving or even if you think you might like to try it, then contact Noel Pando at (915)523-9294. 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.

Next Meeting: PBSS

The next official meeting of the Permian Basin Speleological Society will be held on Tuesday, June 10, 1997 at 7:00 PM in the back meeting room of Murry's Delicatessen. Murry's is located at 3211 west Wadley, Midland, Texas.

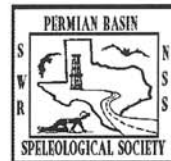
Our Agenda:

Rock Hauling @ CACA June 14, 1997

Trip to Montgomery's Cave, June 21, 1997

Possible PBSS Membership Drive, July 19, More at the meeting.

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



"New PBSS Home Page"

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

"The Hole News" is on here too!

Web space donated courtesy of Bill Bentley and Apex 2000 ISP.

Check Out Mr. Bill's "Caver Net"

http://www.caver.net

It Has Links to All the Caving Web Sites in the Known Universe!

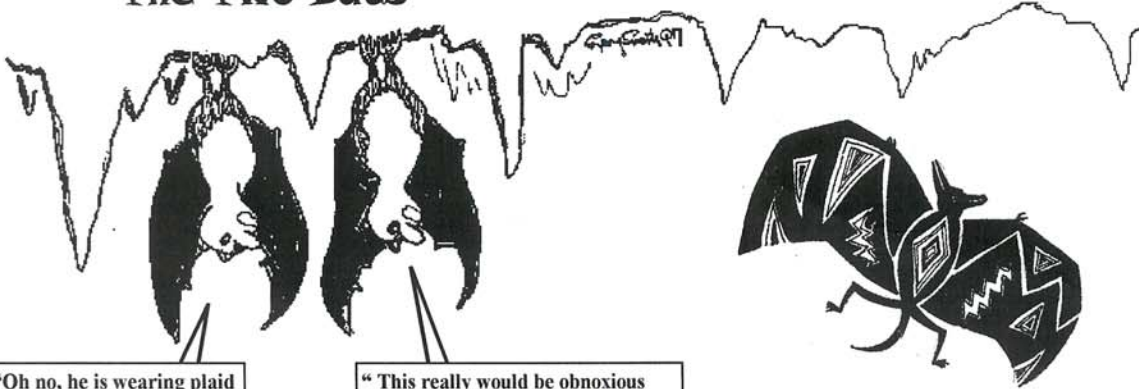
Future Cave Trips: Also other events from PBSS and other grottos.

- **** June 14 PBSS Rock Hauling @ Carlsbad Caverns: Contact Walter Feaster. There is still room.
- June 15-20, CRF Carlsbad Restoration: Contact Barbe Barker @ (214)594-1183 or <cavers@gte.net>.
- **** June 21 PBSS Trip to Montgomery's Cave: We will be conducting vertical rescue training.
- June 23-27, The 1997 NSS Convention: In Sullivan, Missouri. Contact Pam Saberton @ (314)772-6956 or <pams107326@aol.com>. Read all about it on the web page at <http://www.umsl.edu/~joellaws/nss>.
- June 28-29, Powell's Cave Project: Surveying and resurveying, plus cave digging. Contact Terry Holsinger @ (512)443-4241 e-mail: <trhli@sprynet.com>.
- August 10-17, The International Congress of Speleology: Will be held in Switzerland. Contact Urs Widmer, Therwilerstrasse43, CH-4054, Basel, Switzerland, or <congress.uis97@chyn.unine.ch> or check the web page @ <http://www.unic.ch/uis97/> or (in USA) call Martina Golden in Michigan at (810)666-1683. There will be caving camps before and after the congress plus a special symposia.
- October 17-19, Texas Cavers' Reunion: Location to be announced.

***** Denotes a PBSS club Trip...*****

<p style="text-align: center;">New Member!</p> <p>PBSS welcomes Tom Florer to our ranks. Tom is from Midland and wants to go caving. We already gave him a nickname at our last meeting "The New Guy". Welcome Tom and we hope to go caving with you sometime soon.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">PBSS Membership Drive?</p> <p>We have the opportunity to let the Permian Basin know who we are and what we do. Plus may be get some new members while we are at it. We (PBSS) need to discuss this. If you can, try to make the next meeting. We need ideas.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Cave Rescue Numbers</p> <p style="text-align: center;">U.S.A. 1-800-692-0234 MEXICO 1-210-686-0234 (call collect) NEW MEXICO, U.S.A. Try "911" First</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">S.W.C.C.T.F.</p> <p>The SouthWestern Cave Conservation Task Force at this time is still trying to work with the NFS on the pay for caves plan. Their web site is below. More on this as it develops. <http://www.caver.net/swcctf/swccft.htm></p>

**Flip & Flop
The Two Bats**



"Oh no, he is wearing plaid or something!"

"This really would be obnoxious if this cartoon was in color!"
"Hey you, Bozo, get a life!"

TRIP REPORTS: and other lies and stories



HIDDEN AND BLACK CAVES TRIP MAY 17, 1997

Lincoln National Forest, N.M.

Cavers: Black- Dawn Hill, Mary Anne Bauknecht, Susan Herpin, Kevin ?, Tom Kaler, and Rebecca Lee.

Hidden- Dawn and Alvis Hill, Susan Herpin, Kevin ?, Tom Kaler, and Rebecca Lee.

This restoration trip was set up by Alvis and Dawn Hill of the Central Texas Grotto. When I heard of this trip, I jumped at the opportunity and I made Tom jump with me.

Saturday morning after a slow start, we hiked to Black Cave with the idea that there were only a few boot marks to be cleaned from formations. Susan and Kevin, Forest Service volunteers, were our leaders. Entering the cave, it is obvious why it is called Black Cave. Most of the formations really are black and it is terribly difficult to see. Tripping over the slick, popcorn covered floor, we searched for the boot marks to be washed away. As expected, there were few.

Kevin, Susan, Tom, and I climbed in to a lower passage to see what is there and look for cave damage. We found the boot marks restricted mostly to the trail. Tom and Susan worked on those with little success while Dawn, Mary Anne, and I worked on a flowstone with slightly more success. We all agreed it is just too hard to see boot marks on black formations. We looked over the other areas of the cave only to find a subtle impact and most of the impact is permanent.

Exiting the cave at 4:00 P.M. we still had to go Hidden Cave to do some cleaning. Susan and Kevin were clearly tired from their busy schedules and wished that we would forget about going to Hidden. But no dice. We had driven too far to only work in one cave. So Susan came up with the deal that if we hauled 25 gallons of water in to the cave, we could explore the cave instead of cleaning formations. The water would be for future cleaning trips.

Five of us each carried 5 gallons of water at 40 pounds to the entrance and Dawn carried two packs and the rope. Then some tethered the 5 gallon collapsible bottles in backpacks as they rappelled the 50 foot pit and one bottle was lowered on rope. When all the bottles where down, we carried the bottles to the designated location in the upper level. After that was done, we explored the cave.

A clear trail lined with broken formations led us through the cave. We were warned of the sad fact of this cave's history. Countless formations have been intentionally broken for one dumb reason or another. Luckily, work has been done to pick up the broken bits and clear the cave floor. Others who had seen the cave before said it looks much better now. Regardless of the cave's scars, it is still an incredible cave, beautiful in every direction.

The ceilings are covered in stalactites and soda straws. After stumbling through Black Cave, it was refreshing to walk the flat, soft floor of Hidden and gaze at the sites without the fear of tripping. Tom and I peeked at the second, manmade entrance before joining the others to rappel the last 25 foot pit to the lower level.

The lower level is a very large room with a few side passages once again riddled with neat cave stuff. There is a fantastic display of lily pads over what was a very large pool. We walked around the pool and looked in amazement at the under side of these huge lily pads. Something I'd never done before. It was getting late and we decided to exit the cave. Everyone climbed out by 9:30 P.M..

Hidden Cave is one of the prettiest caves I've ever seen and believe it or not I'm glad to have had the opportunity to carry 40 pounds of water to it. This was a trip well worth the high and increasing cost of caving in modern times.

Submitted by Rebecca Lee-Kaler NSS# 42075

More Trip Reports:

Hicks (Wind) and Doc Brito (Burrito) Caves, May 10-11, 1997

I left *Midland* about 6:16 on Friday and headed for South Eastern *New Mexico* after a brief stop for Gas and Ice. I had the ominous feeling of forgetting something. I arrived in *Carlsbad* about 8:15 or so and headed for the local Wal-Mart to buy a jacket since that was one thing I forgot. They were out so I had to settle for a sweat shirt. I finally made it out to The *Parks Ranch Cave* area around 8:30 PM Texas time...When I got there I met Dave and Martha Gose from Las Cruces and about the time it took to make some hot soup for supper the Peermans along with Jeff Lorey arrived. Then around 10 PM Texas time Kerry Lowery and Raul Metcalf arrived. We visited a short while and discussed the cave for pay issues with the NFS and I went to bed as did every one else. Joel Dobson arrived around Midnight or so I am told as I was passed out.

We started for the cave around 8:15 with a planned stop at Guadalupe Mountain Outfitters in *White City* only to discover they had move in the town of *Carlsbad*. We reassembled and drove out to *Hicks Cave* first. It had been many years since I was last there and I could not even begin to tell you when that was. We had the usual fun looking for the entrance and after a 30 minute walk we were there. The combination worked and we were soon all in the cave and well on our way to *Mud City* which is after the 30 feet or so entrance shaft which is easily climbable and about a hundred feet or so down a crawl that could include duck to ape walking. Once in *Mud City* we looked at the different and abundant clay figures and artifacts. I remembered some of the ones we had seen in years past. I noticed that some of the more x-rated ones were gone. Had the self imposed censors from *Ft Stanton Cave* found their way to this small cave in South Eastern *New Mexico*? Oh well... I repaired the clay figures that I had made some 15 years prior and we were soon leaving this neat area...

We soon arrived back at a junction to the entrance and the lower maze section of the cave. Below us was a short 15 to 20 feet climb down that ended in a ledge that was about 10 feet to the main maze cave area. We rigged a rope to aid in the climb back up. There is a pit on one side that extends down another 15 feet and makes it look a lot more exposed than it actually is. After watching Kerry slither down like a pro the rest of us made it down, with me being the last one.

Once we were all at the main level we rested and were soon split into 2 groups with Raul and Kerry in one and Joel and myself in the other. We headed off down a passage and the other group disappeared down another. After a short time we found that we had went in a circle and were at the bottom of the pit cause we could see the rope dangling down and knew it was the only rope in the cave. After this little excursion I went the high rout and Joel chose to climb down below and parallel to me I think. I finally came to a spot where I cliffed out to about a 30 foot drop and found that a back trace led to an intermediate level that would bypass the cliff and allow me to continue on my way. It was here that I could see Joels lights from a little ways below me, so I waited and yelled to him to come to where I was located. He did and soon we were at the extent of this passage and came to where I believe we were close to the surface in some way cause the rocks that were blocking the passage ahead were rougher and there was a lot of the kind of dirt that you would find and associate with a collapse. We exited this passage and returned to the rope and the main room. Here we waited and I took a short nap, and then ate lunch. After a hour the other team showed up and we visited some more. I was the first to climb up and the the others, Raul brought up the rear and he had the rope with him...We all exited the cave around 12:30 PM. Locked the gate back and went back to the trucks at the top of the hill. Every one else ate lunch and snacked. I had a coke and some chips while I read my May issue of the NSS News. Raul and Kerry went off for a short hike, I think in search of caves, but rumor has it that they were looking for lavender cavers? I dunno! Oh well (Inside Joke! You had to have been there!)

Our next cave was the one called *Doc Brito*. We drove on past the oil well pad and parked. Then we made our way down the ravine floor to the main canyon area. I had never been to this cave so the directions we got from the BLM were critical and I believe they provide us with a 10th generation copy of a topographic map to aid in our finding the cave. In spite of our odds we found the cave faster that it took to find *Hicks Cave*, of course that makes sense cause none of us had ever been there. After a brief opening of the combination lock and the gate was no longer baring us entry. Raul was the first to go in and he hollered up at Kerry telling him every detail of his journey downward in this tight crack like entrance.

I started down after Kerry and soon discovered that gravity is our friend. With some fancy maneuvering I had made it in. At the small entry room we all waited for Joel to come down and off we went through a step down crack passage to another room. From here we explored onward following the cave in what I would guess a Easterly direction. (Like it really matters underground!) There was a few really small crawlways but with a fair amount of surface skin loss and some cursing it is possible to squeeze through.

The back of the cave and I call it that only because it becomes impossible to continue anymore in the forward direction, we found a shaft approximately 45 feet deep. We rigged our rope after Raul and myself went half the distance of the cave to retrieve it. There were few tie off points, but Kerry found a good one. Now as luck would have it, warm clothing was not the only thing I did not have. I had also much to my dismay forgot to bring along any vertical gear. Oh I had rope, but just no vertical gear. As Walter would say "Bummer". So I elected to stay above and guard the rope from nylon eating crickets. Why any caver in the southwest knows the dangers with rope and the voracious appetite of nylon eating crickets "*cannabis nylontym*". (Diane Northrup forgive me!)

The rest of the group went down the shaft and I watched from the lip. To me it looked like a stream passage below at the bottom, but They told me it was room with a small impassable crack at the side and no real leads going anywhere...I slept and soon the lights from below and the clatter of vertical gear had me awake. The group had climbed up and I decided to start out since I had to relieve my bladder and also there was no point in causing a bottle neck at some of the tighter spots. We all made it out and was soon we were in the sunshine and cool desert outside air. Only a caver knows the experience of coming out into the sunlight and enjoying the freedom of movement and the freshness that is lacking below. I had a real good time and even though I had seen one of these caves before it was still fun. If you ever out new Mexico way and want to see some small but interesting caves remember that *Doc Brito* and *Hicks* caves are waiting there....

submitted by Bill Bentley NSS # 21977

ATTEND THE 1997 TSA LABOR DAY PROJECT

This is a clean-up project to the much acclaimed Gruta del Palmito at Bustamante, Nuevo Leon, Mexico just 70 miles south of Laredo, Texas, USA. 29 August through 1 September 1997. This is a great chance to have one last big caving flight before school gets going again. Don't miss this one!

This is a cave of mind-boggling proportions, huge formations, and tiny helictites. Palmito is totally off the scale of most Texas caves. It is a huge chamber on the order of the Big Room at Carlsbad Caverns, with highly decorated side passages. It is also in need of clean-up and graffiti removal. If you've never been to Palmito this is your chance to have a mind-altering experience and see one of the classic caves of Northern Mexico. If you've never been to Mexico, this is your chance to do that too. Do not let this opportunity go by to do some good caving and help restore this big cave. This will be a 3-or 4-day weekend and we will have other caves in the area open for caving, including the famed Predipicio, overlooking the beautiful Canon Bustamante, where we will camp next to the warm springs which are the headwaters of the clear Rio Sabinas. There will be a big feed put on for the cavers by the people of Bustamante on Saturday or Sunday night. Here is the tentative schedule:

Friday & Friday night- Arrive at the campsite-just follow the map or signs provided. Bring lots of drinking water.

Saturday- Work day. Teams will pick up trash in designated areas of the cave and carry it out. Bring plastic garbage bags. Other teams will work on graffiti removal. We are hoping to get some of the experts and their equipment from New Mexico to help and give instructions. Another crew or two will be setting concrete steps to replace the slippery slope just inside the cave entrance.

Sunday-Caving and finish-up-work. Caving in Palmito will include the Birthday Passage and New (Red) Room, Hall of Giants, and other rarely visited areas. Bring your photo gear and lots of light! Precipicio will be rigged for cavers to visit. It is across the canyon from the campground, high on the canyon wall via a long hike, and has 30 and 10 meter rappels inside the cave as well as a spectacular rappel of about 200 meters from the entrance to the canyon floor after you've done the cave. This is another "must see" cave for those of you who are vertically qualified. It's big in the back of this cave, folks! We are working on having several other area caves and pits open to cavers. Access to the Minas Viejas area caves is restricted. We may have limited trips arranged on a reservation basis, but are making no promises.

Monday-Caving and driving home. Some of the local caves and mines may be open for a quick visit on your way north.

Look for maps, directions, and requirements for crossing into Mexico in the next 2 issues of the TSA Newsletter.

ATTENTION PBSS MEMBERS!

The above article was taken from the TSA Activities Newsletter.

What do you think? Can we make this a PBSS grotto trip? We have discussed a trip to Mexico for a long time. This looks like a good opportunity. We have some time before the trip to make plans. Be at our next meeting and let's talk about it.

Editor's Note:

As you have read in the above article and the preceding the measurements are given in meters and kilometers.

So here is the translation for all of the metric impaired:

1 meter =39.37 inches or just over a yard.

1,000 meters = kilometer.

1 kilometer = 0.62137 of a mile or 3,280 feet 10 inches. Or 2,000 feet short of a mile.

1 mile = 5,280 feet,