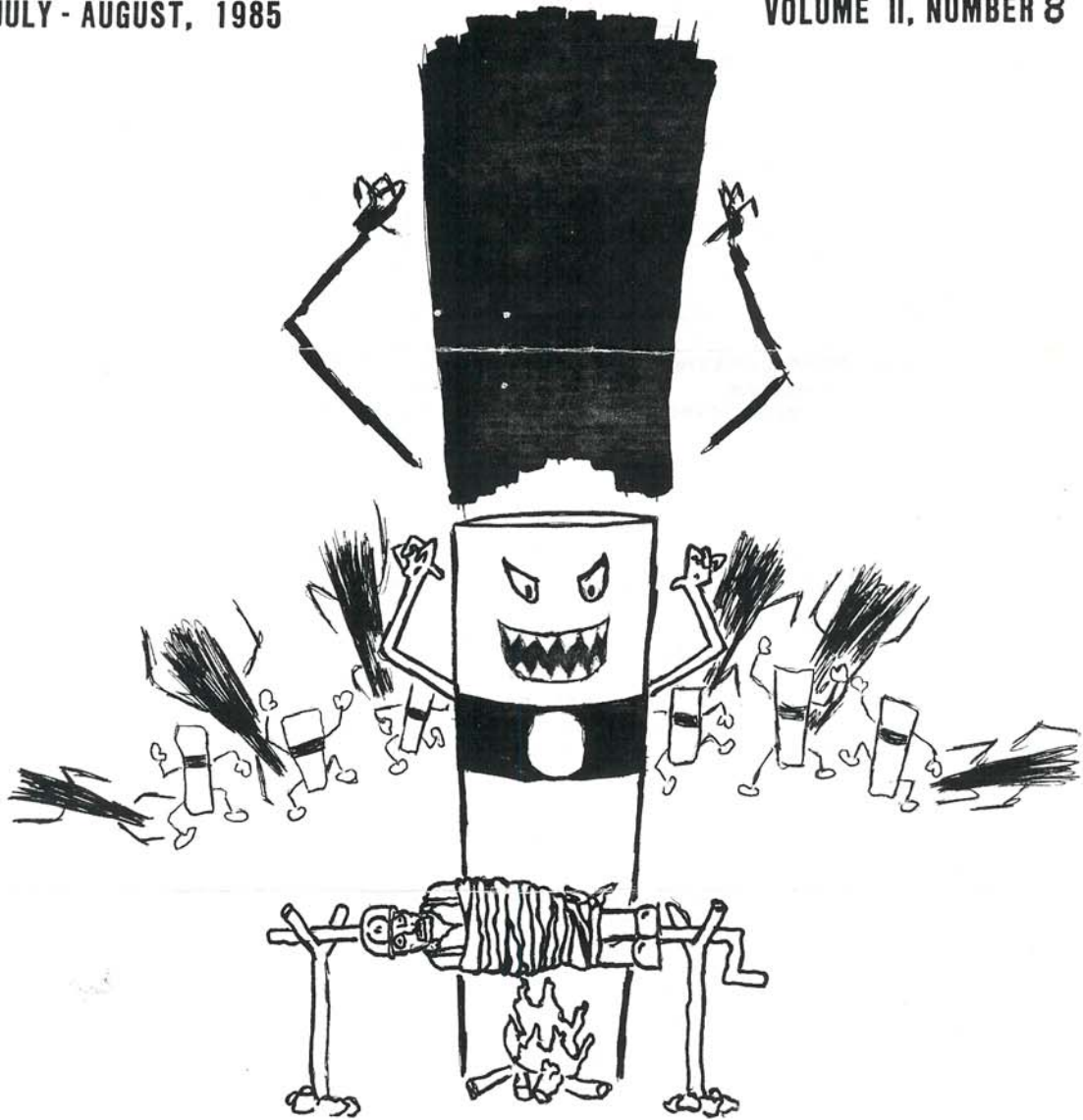


PBSS SPYLUNK

JULY - AUGUST, 1985

VOLUME II, NUMBER 8



Revenge of the Skippers



The P.B.S.S. Monthly Spylunk

JULY - AUGUST, 1985



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MEETING: The September meeting of the PBSS will be at Bill Bentley's apartment, number 621, Tremont Apts, at 7:00 PM on Thursday, Sept 19. The apt. complex is located on the NW corner of the loop around Midland, directly East of the Fairmont Lanes bowling alley, and one block N of Wadley. If you would like further assistance, just call Bill at 697-3079 (preferably between the hours of 1 AM and 6 AM).

The October meeting of the PBSS will occur at Bill Greenlee's in Andrews. The address is 919 NE Ave F (call 523-9550 for further info). As usual, our meeting will be at 7 PM on the third Thursday- October 17, in this case.

COMING ATTRACTIONS: Bill Bentley will be conducting a novice cave trip to New Mexico's McKittrick Hill caves near Carlsbad on the weekend of September 20-22. We need experienced trip leaders, since we expect a rather large group of speleo-neophytes. Be at the September meeting if you are interested in attending either as a leader or a tourist.

For October, we will attempt to gain permission to visit Langtry Lead and/or H.T. Meyers Cave, both near Del Rio, Texas. These are typical vertical caves with multiple pitches, so dust off your Gibbs'.

Labor Day Weekend, 1985 is the date for the next **Southwest Regional** meeting, to be held at Freezeout Canyon in the North Guadalupe Mountains. Festivities begin Friday night, August 30th, and continue through Monday, September 2nd. Refer to the map attached to this issue for directions. Dave and Carol Belski in Carlsbad can provide explicit details concerning this event- call 505-885-6168....Activities will include caving in an area hitherto unknown to PBSS spylunks, as well as the usual social amenities.

The Southwest Region will officially be hosting the **1986 NSS Convention**, to be held at Tularosa, New Mexico, next June. A concentrated effort from all you spylunks will enable the SWR to accomplish this task. The payoff will be in the form of new friendships, a better understanding of caver psychology, and a guano-load of fun!

Quote of the Month: "There's nearly 100 percent probability that all the passages in this cave connect". -- Bill Bentley.

Public Relations: Our photographic display of NSS caving is currently on loan to the University of Texas, Permian Basin in Odessa. Drop by for a look and an NSS membership form if you haven't already!

Recent Activity:

Our grotto sponsored a novice cave trip to the Guads during the weekend of June 15th and 16th. Attending were Bill Bentley, Barb Edson, Rebecca Egg, Bill Greenlee, Andrew Grieco, Tony Grieco, Vicki Grieco, Fritzi Heron, Randy _____, and Robby _____ (no kin to Fred _____, John _____, or Frank _____, reported in the January '85 issue of the Spylunk). Actually Randy and Robby aren't even brothers! They are both musicians performing with the Midland Symphony. Randy wished he'd brought his French horn along on the trip, but Robby was thankful that he'd left his piano at home. This trip was Andrew's first campout (he's only 1, remember), but probably is not the last....Andrew found a very useful job - he babysitted his Daddy while the rest of us went caving! We visited Black Cave and the entrance of Cottonwood. Also, we rigged a vertical practice climb in a tall tree at the campsite. No one really felt psyched for Hell Below, so we blew that one off. It'll still be there next time.



The ??th annual Goat Roast, sponsored by the Pecos Valley Grotto of Carlsbad happened on the weekend of the 10th and 11th of August. I don't want to rub it in, but word has it that Texans actually outnumbered New Meskins on Friday night. The PBSS contingent included Bill Bentley, Pixie Clark, Pat Copeland, Andrew Grieco, Liz Grieco, Tony Grieco, Vicki Grieco, Pat Hill, Pat's girlfriend, and Terry Hill. A total of 67 humanoids and 3 canines attended. The goat was delicious.

Carlsbad Caverns Restoration Project August 17, 1985.

Ron Kerbo, cave specialist at the Caverns, coordinated the efforts of eight willing-and-able volunteers from the PBSS and the Mesilla Valley Grotto. He assigned his summer assistant, Helen Thornton, to provide guidance as necessary. Since we were working right beside the tourist trail near the "Temple of the Sun" formation, a frequently heard question was, "What are y'all doing?"

OK. Since I answered that question so many times, I guess once more can't be any worse. Actually, our mission was to carefully remove loose silt and broken formations from the areas near the man-made trail and to deposit the debris in a hole in the cave floor. After several iterations of explaining to tourists why we were off the trail and touching things, the explanations became somewhat exaggerated. Some variations were as follows:

- A) We are digging for a child that strayed off the trail
- B) We are sculpting new formations
- C) We are trying to beat the record for the world's largest cavern
- D) We are the fairies that inhabit "Fairyland"
- E) Et Cetera..... use your imagination

Fortunately, a ranger happened by and relieved us of our burden as ambassadors. He also took pictures of us after accusing us of being communist spies. After finishing with our task, Helen rewarded us with a tour of the Lower Cave. The work was actually enjoyable and we expressed interest in returning for more of the same another time.

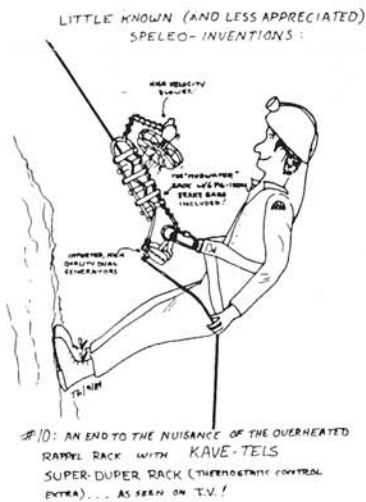
The Permian Basin representatives included Bill Bentley, Bill Greenlee, Liz Grieco, and Tom Hefner. Las Cruces volunteers included Karen George, Tim George, Dave Gose, and Dick Larson. Bill Greenlee, Liz, Tom, and Dave also explored Resurgence Cave that night until the passage completely sumped. The MVG covers planned to visit Sidewinder Cave the next day. Hopefully, they survived.



Trip Report: "Cincinnati Liz and the Cavern of Doom"
(Originally titled "Looking for Mr. J. Goodbar") by Liz Grieco.

During the week of July 12th, my brother Tony received a call from Scott Adams and Jim Goodbar. It seems that the Pecos Valley Grotto was running a bit short on cavers for the month's trip, and since PBSS was in the same situation, we decided to join forces for the weekend. Between Tony and Jim, there were enough passes to keep us caving for many days, but we only thoroughly explored Damn Cave, Pink Palette, and Pink Panther.

Since there is a 50 foot free drop in Pink Panther, Tony had to give me a crash course in rappelling the night before we left. Hanging 20 feet above the ground with a rope attached to the railing of a highway overpass, we managed to baffle a few farmers, but I ascended and descended a few times without any major problems. The real test would be the actual rappel into Pink Panther...



The following day, Tony and I packed our saddle bags, mounted the Bronco, and rode off into the sunset - literally. With bloodshot eyes, we managed to find our way through the outskirts of Carlsbad, and, in the twilight, locate Jim Goodbar's house.

After a quick breakfast, I helped Jim feed his potential Goat Roast candidates and their friends the chickens while Scott and Tony packed the Bronco. As we piled in the car, I felt my brother cringe when Jim called his dog, Hishi, to climb in. Nails through the upholstery, he thought, would not be too pleasant, and neither would being shut up in a closed, hot, car with a smelly dog. However, she was a very enjoyable companion, and I soon found that it is much worse being shut up in a closed, hot, car with a bunch of smelly cavers!

We arrived at Pink Panther parking lot in the early morning, and after packing the needed gear, we were on our way - stumbling over rocks and avoiding lechuguilla. We were blessed by the weather, and aside from occasional showers, it was a cool, overcast day.

I was exhausted from the walk, but only Tony was scratched and bruised. He decided to take a short-cut down the cliff by rolling, and stopped sliding only when his head cracked a large rock.

Our first stop was Damn Cave, and Jim gave us numerous renditions on how it got its name. There are some beautiful dam-like formations, and a few other interesting sights. We also visited Pink Palette, and as I joyfully followed Tony and Scott up the trail, I had a minor encounter with a rock rattler. Nothing serious, we just shooed it away with a very long stick.



*NOW DO YOU BELIEVE THAT THE TRAFFIC IN THIS
CAVE IS HAVING AN EFFECT ON THE WILDLIFE?*

The highlight of the weekend was to be found in the upper and lower levels of Pink Panther Cave, but the hard part was climbing through the entrance of the cave. The Forest Service gate to Panther is physical proof that the end product is not always as originally planned. After stepping up to the 2'x2' opening that is inconveniently located in a small but steep gully, one must chimney down about seven feet through a mass of Daddy Longleg spiders. Then there's the 50 foot free drop. After rigging up, Tony clucked over me like a mother hen, and I carefully descended. Once below, I began to admire the beauty of Panther. We looked around some, and worked our way back around to the pretty spots, but the best sights are on the upper and lower levels of the cave. Chimneying up to the upper level made me very nervous, but it was well worth the effort. The room had more formations than I had ever seen -- the walls were completely covered and there were thousands upon thousands of delicate straws of all colors and lengths. Simply magnificent.

The best part for me was the unique sight in the lower level. After sliding down into a wide crack, we crawled through a low cavern of wet gypsum. There, before my mortal eyes, lay the complete remains of a 20,000 year old *Arcdotis semis* (aka BEAR). It was one of the most wonderful experiences a future paleoanthropologist could hope to have.

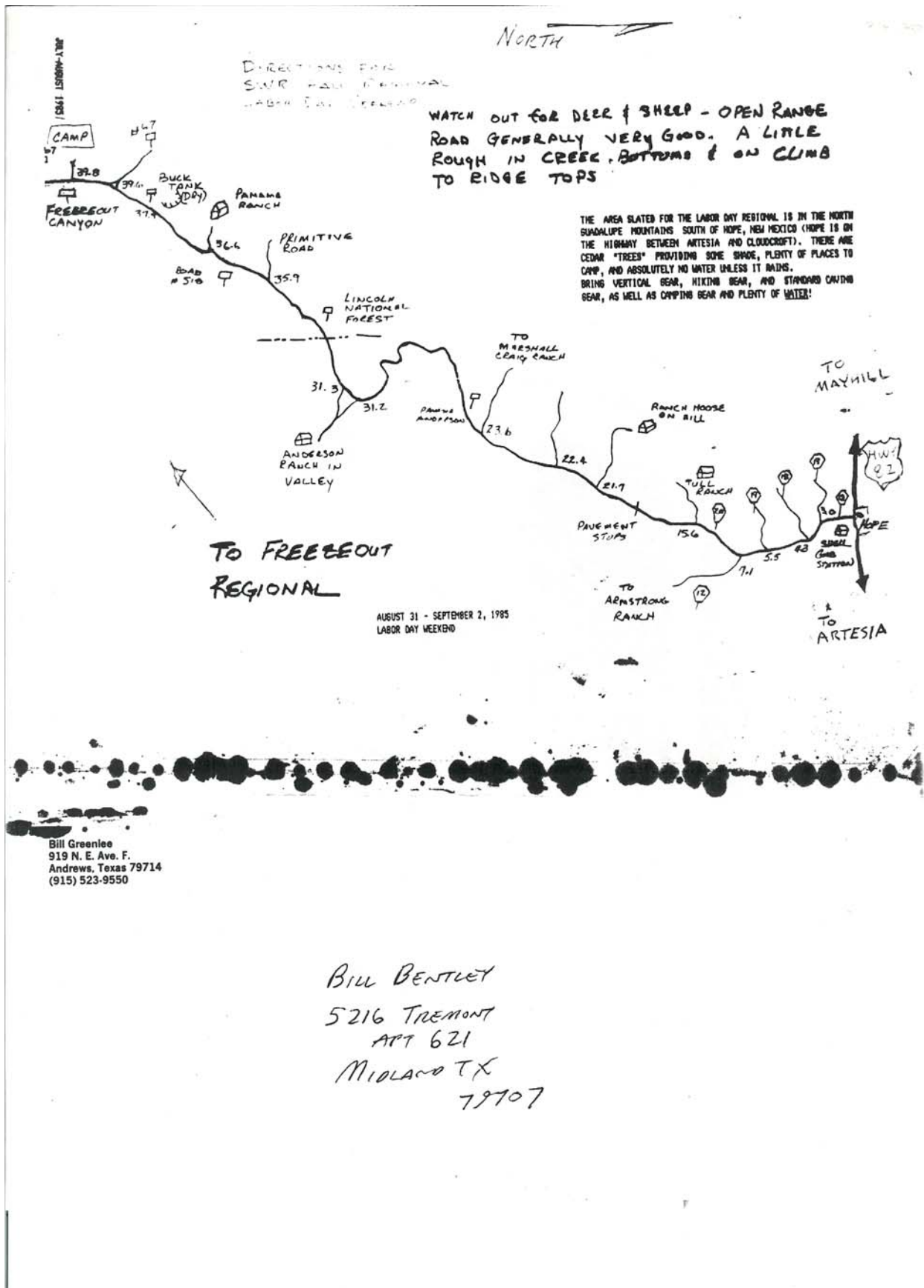
I was exhausted and my legs were weak, but I still had to ascend. I was fine until I got a few feet off the ground, and then my knees began to shake so badly that I could hardly straighten my legs. Slowly, I made my way up the rope, with few technical problems, and overall, the more experienced cavers were impressed with my first-time performance. I recommend this trip for any caver. Tony says this was one of the most beautiful caves he has ever seen. A trip to the Guadalupe Mountains is always worth the trip, but getting to see Pink Panther is well worth the trouble.



HEY JIM- DIDN'T I TELL YOU TO GET THIS BROKEN PADLOCK
FIXED BEFORE YOU ISSUED ANY MORE PERMITS?

Cover Art: This issue's cover, depicts the wrath of the "Skipper Gods"; apparently as a direct result of the 2nd annual Skipper Roast, held at the SWR summer regional (refer to the last issue of the Spylunk for details). Many thanks to Matt Killam for his imaginative creations. Now that his cast is off, perhaps we'll be seeing more of Matt and his drawings.

Please send cave related material for publication in the PBSS Spylunk to Bill Greenlee, 919 N.E. Ave F, Andrews, Texas 79714.



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