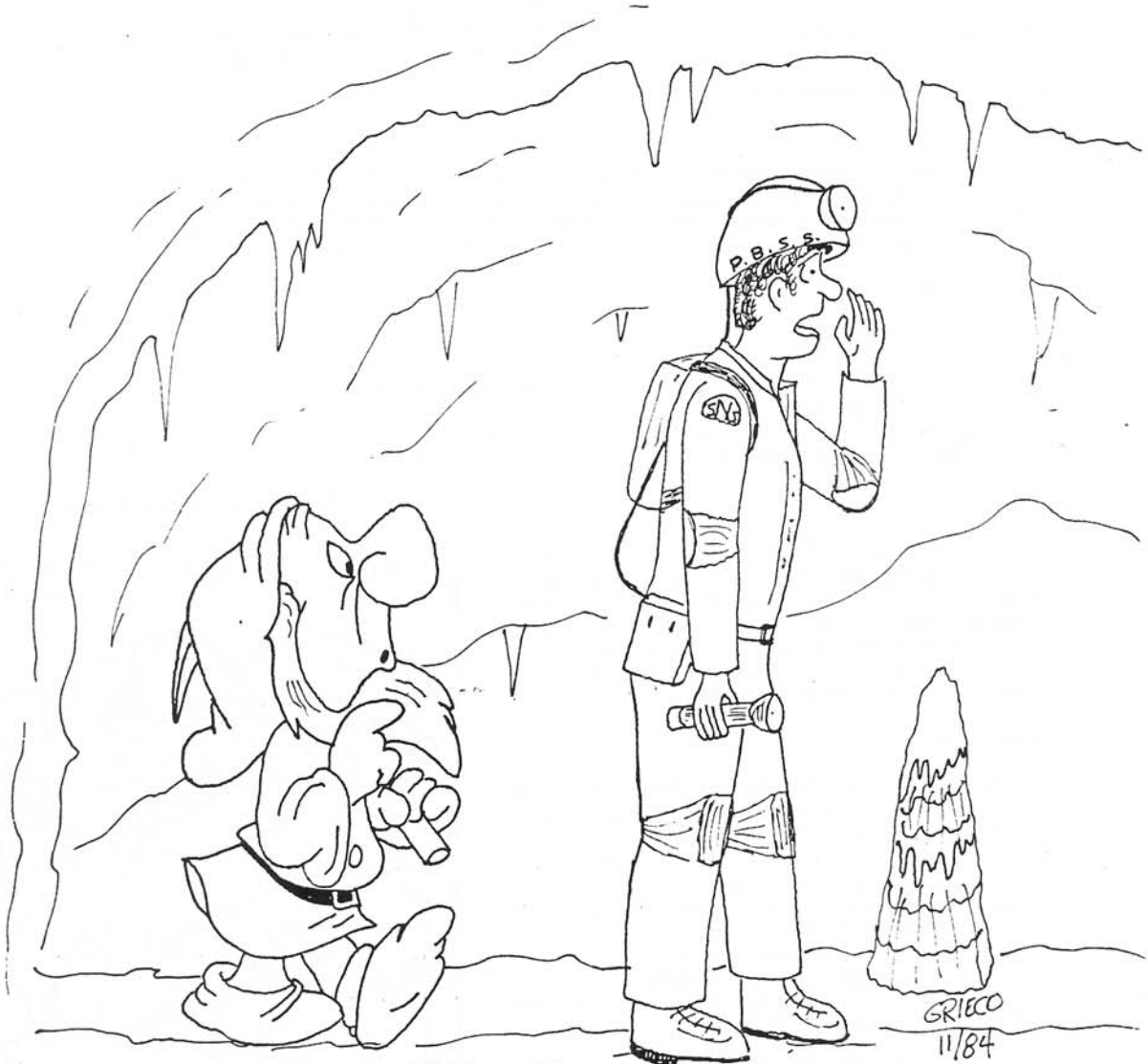


P.B.S.S. SPYLUNK

VOLUME 3

NUMBER 7

JULY-AUGUST 1986

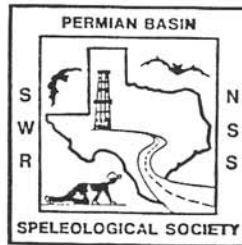


HEY - DID ANYONE SEE SIX GUYS FROM THE
DISNEY GROTTO GO THROUGH HERE?

P.B.S.S. SPYLUNK

JULY-AUGUST 1986

BILL BENTLEY-PRESIDENT
4534 SINCLAIR #2-102
MIDLAND, TEXAS 79707
(915) 697-3079



VOLUME 3 NUMBER 7

TONY GRIECO-EDITOR
4723 W. ILLINOIS
MIDLAND, TEXAS 79703
(915) 697-0323

MEETING

The August meeting of the PBSS will be held THURSDAY, AUGUST 14. Plans are to hold a barbecue at a yet-to-be-named public park in Midland. If you are interested in attending, call Bill Bentley or Tony Grieco sometime before the scheduled date- hopefully we will have come up with a more specific location by then.

NEWS OF NOTE

PBSS SCHEDULE:

AUG. 16-17: SAN SABA COUNTY CAVES (NOTE CHANGE OF DATE)
SEP. 13-14: DEEP CAVE
OCT. 18-19: HIDDEN, BLACK, COTTONWOOD CAVES (PBOC TRIP)
NOV. 8-9 : SENTINEL, BIG DOOR CAVES (PENDING PERMITS)

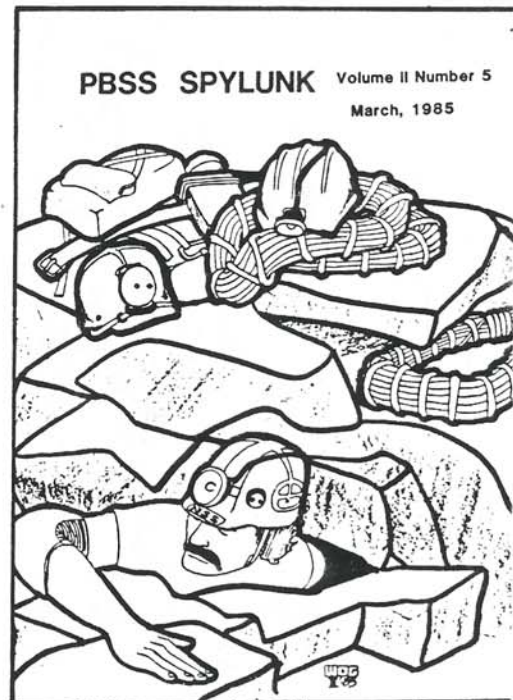
KUDOS:

The Cover of the SPYLUNK, volume 2, number 5 (March, 1985), won honorable mention at the NSS Graphic Arts Salon which was held at the Tularosa convention. Special congratulations go to Bill Greenlee, who was both the cover artist and the editor of that issue. Not bad for a bunch of young upstarts!

CAVE TRIPS

AUGUST 16-17: SAN SABA COUNTY CAVES. Note that the date of this trip has been changed due to a conflict with the PVG Goat Roast (see below). Pat Copeland has informed me that she and Pixie Clark have scouted out several good caves with lots of vertical work and unchecked leads in them, and that she has cleared things with the local ranchers. Sounds like everything is set for a super caving weekend! If you need more information, call Pat Copeland (915) 643-2952 or Pixie Clark (915) 646-0755.

AUGUST 9: PVG GOAT ROAST, to be held at the base of Three Mile Hill in the Guads. Scheduled serving time is 6 PM, and the price



of admission is \$2.50 plus one large covered dish (presumably with food under the cover) per family or group. Caving is planned to help restore and clean up Cottonwood Cave, and a "look-see" trip into Hell Below to help plan future restoration work is also scheduled. It is asked that you bring any extra lights and/or hard hats, if you have them. Call Dave or Carol Belski (505) 885-6168 for more information. If you can't get hold of either of them call Bill Greenlee (523-9550) or Tony Grieco.

TRIP REPORTS

CARLSBAD CAVERNS RESTORATION FIELD CAMP, June 17-20, 1986.

PBSS Participants: Bill Bentley, Pixie Clark, Pat Copeland, Tony Grieco (Report by Tony)

A total of 28 cavers from all over the U.S. made up the crowd at this year's Field Camp, and the effort was so successful that there is talk of making it an annual event.

The restoration work consisted mainly of excavating areas in the Big Room and removing dirt and debris which was put in place during trail building, thus exposing the original cavern floor. The group in which I worked concentrated its efforts at 'Cave Man Junction' and the 'Hall of Giants': The work was tedious at times and very painstaking, but the group was enthusiastic and the results were incredible to behold. The most gratifying job was to stand at the edge of the trail and explain to the tourists what all the work was about - of course, there were the usual stupid comments and odd questions, but most of the people we each got to talk to were genuinely appreciative of the time and effort that we were donating to the Park Service.

After-hours activities included tours of the Left-Hand Tunnel and the Lake of the Clouds, as well as slide shows on various subjects, including the Lechuguilla Cave discovery. After the camp had ended, there were also tours of Spider and Ogle Caves, but by that time all of the spylunks in the group had headed out to Three-Mile Hill to help out in the pre-convention trips.

NSS PRE-CONVENTION TRIPS, June 20-22, 1986.

PBSS Participants: Bill Bentley, Terry Bolger, Pixie Clark, Pat Copeland, Bill Greenlee, Tony Grieco, Matt Killam, Suzy Noldan (Report by Tony)

Thanks, mainly, to the organizational skills of "Wild Bill" Greenlee, the NSS pre-convention trips went off with no major hitches. Trips were run daily to Hidden, Black, Cottonwood, Wonderland and Hell Below, and all them yankees who were unfamiliar with the Guads were extremely impressed. Bill G. sends his thanks to all of you who showed up to help guide the trips - it couldn't have happened without you!

Below are two trip reports by Bill Bentley covering the trips that he led.

HIDDEN CAVE, Eddy County, N.M., June 21, 1986.

Participants: Bill Bentley, Bob Zimmerman, James Harbison, Michael Katz, Fred Evans, Ken Nichols (Report by Bill)

We left the soggy, wet campground at about 9:30 in a rented four-wheel drive Bronco that the New Yorkers had picked up in El Paso

LITTLE KNOWN (AND LESS APPRECIATED)
SPELEO-INVENTIONS:



#13 ALL THE DISADVANTAGES OF CARBIDE AND ELECTRIC
CAVING CAN BE YOURS -- WITH THE WHEET MODEL
5500 CAP-MOUNTED LEAD-ACID ELECTRIC
LIGHTING SYSTEM /

and had a big discussion on how to park it once we got to the Hidden Cave parking area. We found the trail and the entrance very easily and rigged the pit with a 100' Blue-water rope. Everyone rappelled into the lower level of the cave and explored every possible lead in about two hours. Then the New Yorkers ascended to the upper level and proceeded to explore all of it. I, meanwhile, had exited the cave and opened the gate to make an easy exit for everyone. We derigged at about 2 PM and went back to camp.

COTTONWOOD CAVE, Eddy County, N.M., June 22, 1986.

Participants: Bill Bentley, Jack Crabtree, Bob Crabtree, Pat Copeland, Nathan Pfeffer, Laura Jones (Report by Bill)

Our group assembled in the parking area midmorning and we entered the cave. The people who had never seen Cottonwood were in amazement and awe over its immense size. After a few minutes we found the gate and got everyone over the ledge that precedes it. Soon we were through the gate and on our way to Wonderland (where's Alice?). This was my first trip to Wonderland, but with the well written directions I had I couldn't miss it. The coke bottle chimney was a bit difficult, but with a little work and a handline soon everyone except Jack was up in the crack, then through the keyhole and vertizontal and- wow- into Wonderland. The group spent a lot of time in Wonderland and took a lot of pictures. I left and exited the cave about twenty minutes ahead of the main group. In the main section I found Jack milling around, so we walked out together and waited for everyone else. We left in the early afternoon and I broke camp and headed for Tularosa and the convention, but thats another story.

NSS CONVENTION, Tularosa, N.M., June 23-28, 1986.

PBSS Participants: Bill Bentley, Bill Greenlee

Bill B. and Bill G. both attended the convention, and both reported that they had a good (if somewhat soggy) time. Hopefully we'll see a full report on this one of these issues (C'mon, guys, we're all dying to hear your tales of these five days of unbridled revelry and debauchery...).

SOMEWHERE IN MEXICO, July 4-6, 1986

Participants: Terry Bolger, Bill Greenlee



Bill reports that he and Terry headed down to Mexico to "look for caves". Evidently they didn't find any caves to speak of, but Bill tells me that they did spend one fun-filled night with his truck stuck in a flooded stream (no damage was sustained, but Fritz told me that his truck now squeaks a lot-even when it isn't moving). Maybe Bill or Terry will elaborate in a future issue.

CAVE MANAGEMENT MEETING, Carlsbad, N.M., July 11, 1986.
PBSS Participants: None

A meeting was held in Carlsbad to gather caver input for the USFS concerning future changes in the management policy of the caves in the Guads. A noble cause, to be sure, since we cavers have to live with anything the USFS comes up with, but since our grotto was given ONLY TWO DAYS NOTICE, even the people in the PBSS who knew a meeting was going to occur and wanted to attend could not schedule it. Hopefully we will get a full report of what went on at this meeting so that we can keep you informed.

CORRESPONDENCE

Reproduced below is a letter that the PBSS received from the West Virginia Speleological Survey, and the PBSS reply. If you are an NSS member, you probably don't care about Trout Rock Cave at all, though you have no doubt heard of it if you read the NSS News. If you are not an NSS member, then you probably care even less! Anyway, in the last several months we have received several letters concerning this 'issue', and it finally got so annoying that we thought we should express our heartfelt opinions and deeply held convictions in this regard officially. Since our reply was written, we haven't heard a peep from anyone concerning Trout Rock Cave, so it must have had the desired affect!

WEST VIRGINIA SPELEOLOGICAL SURVEY

P.O. Box 200
Barrackville, W.Va. 26559
304/366-6035

MAY 20, 1986

DEAR FELLOW CAVERS

It is sad that our Society is being torn apart by a dispute such as Trout Rocks and that two of our board members (Rane Curl and Janet Thorn) have chosen to disregard the wishes of most of the local cavers in West Va..

This fuss has been growing since Rane and Janet engineered the betrayal of the cavers whom collectively raised the money for the purchase of Trout Cave. These Cavers and out side groups contributed most of the money needed to aquire the cave with the specific purpose of keeping the cave open as a novice cave. In fact printed solicitations were distributed outside the society in an effort to raise money to by a recreational cave. I quote from one of these sent to the Boy Scouts of Wva. (doners) "Trout and New Trout will be reopened to the public in much the same manner as they have always been."

Some of you may have noticed that Rane sent you a letter in which he stated "The property was purchased to preserve protect and manage significant caves" . This was

not the reason the cave was aquired or why we contributed our cash to the project. If you remember we did buy Shelta to preserve its Biota and protect the cave. Trout however was bought to go caving in . Pure and simple Trout is a cavers cave and was bought to give you and your children a place to cave.

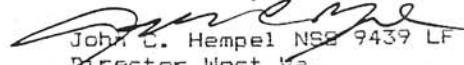
The fact that TWO (yes only TWO) endangered bats have decided to inhabit the cave should not change this cave into a Biologic preserve. The bats live in a small side passage near the entrance that is almost never entered and can be restricted (as the management comittiee proposed) with minimum effort. No bats have used the cave in the quantity that Rane references for a least 30 years and the cave is currently one of the most traveled caves in the east. If we decide to close caves because they might be good habitats for bats, bugs or fungus then we better give up caving as a sport. How many caves in your area might provide a home for a wayward bat? Would you like to see Carlsbad , Mc Fails or any of your best caves closed because some one with a thermometer said the cave might, just maybe, be able to house a bat?

It is important to understand that this is not cavers versus bat people with Trout being the ball in the tennis match. This is consevationists ,cavers and scientists from the West Virginia area fighting for the right to manage our the caves and to practice conservation in the way we feel best for the preservation of all caves and cave life. We don't feel that the positive effects of the Trout closure can out weigh the wide spread destruction or negative impact on the larger bat habitats located in nearby caves. We feel that the increased visitation caused by this closer will in effect do more damage to our conservation efforts than saving TWO bats will do to promote the repopulation of the species.

I fear that the conservation back lash and the loss of support for the Societies projects, caused by this fight can never be repaired. There are many other projects that we could better spend our money on and do much more for conservation.

As a final note let me remind you that every grotto in WVA and at least one Region are on record opposing this closer and the gate . So please stand with us if you are thinking of contributing to the gate please reconsider. We suggest instead you donate to the save the cave fund and mark your check " NOT FOR THE GATE". THANK AND GOOD CAVING

SINCERELY,


John C. Hempel NSB 9439 LF
Director West Va.
Speleological Survey
BOG 1979-1985

John Hempel
W. Va. Speleological Survey
P. O. Box 200
Barrackville, W. Va 26559

John:

I have received your letter on Trout Rock Cave (as well as several others from different sources), I have talked the matter over with several of the members of the PBSS, and we have unanimously concluded that.....

WE DON'T CARE

With all due respects, nothing you can do to, for or with the cave, its proposed gate, its bats, bugs, fungus or its whatever will have any effect whatsoever on any caver in West Texas. Of course there are broad issues in the realm of spelunking which need to be addressed on a national level, but we do not believe that the ultimate disposition of this particular cave is one of them. We have no desire to get involved in what we regard as your local speleo-politics.

I hope I am not coming off as mean or anything, because that really isn't my intention. I realize that this is an issue which is of great concern and importance to those in your area. On the other hand, I would like you to understand that this whole issue is becoming somewhat annoying to at least a few of us who have no direct stake in its outcome, and, although I've talked to noone outside our grotto concerning the matter, I would be willing to wager that there are innumerable others throughout the NSS who feel the same way.

Sincerely,



Tony Grieco
Secretary/Editor
Permian Basin Speleological Society

EDITORIAL COMMENTS

1) As you have probably noticed (if you haven't, then pretend you have, cause it makes this editor feel better), the SPYLUNK has been coming out on a bi-monthly basis these last several issues. This does not mean that the PBSS has become any less active or involved in the caving world, or anything of that sort. The explanation, like the explanation for virtually everything that has happened recently in West Texas, lies in the recent downturn of the oil business. Because of the recent drop in the price of oil, all the oil companies have decided to "make do with less", which means that they have laid off a whole bunch of people and are now expecting those of us who remain to pick up the slack. Cities Service (for whom I work) is no exception. The bottom line is that your editor has recently had much less time to worry about putting out this newsletter.

Hopefully all of this will prove to be temporary, and I will be able to resume at least semi-regular monthly publication, but for the time being you can help out by sending in cover art, trip reports, cartoons, editorial comments, etc., which makes putting this rag together a whole lot simpler. It also makes it a lot more interesting to read! Any help you can give me will be greatly appreciated.

11) On two occasions recently (the Lechuguilla Cave dig and the Special Management Meeting) members of the PBSS were essentially prevented from participating because we were not given sufficient notice to get the word out. The PBSS has many willing, active and involved cavers, but none of us sit around by the phone waiting for someone to call us on Thursday night to tell us that something important is going to happen Friday! We are all active people, and we tend to plan our weekend activities in advance, and in order for us to be able to plan for these various speleo-activities we need at least a reasonable amount of advance notice.

All that we, as a grotto, ask of the Powers-That-Be, whether Regional, or BLM, or USFS, or anyone else is that whenever possible we be given at least two weeks notice of upcoming activities- even if we can't get the word out in the SPYLUNK, we can (and have done so in the past) call all of our grotto members and let them know what is going on. There is no excuse, given the extent that cavers are organized in the Southwest Region, that anyone should be kept from participating in caving activities because of lack of communication.

MISCELLANEOUS

THE BOY IS BACK DEPT.:

Word on the grapevine is that the illustrious DENNIS DOUGHERTY is returning to beautiful Midland, at least temporarily, in the near future. We hope that married life or being a Californian haven't spoiled him for caving.

MONTGOMERY CAVE DIG:

We are trying to get together a dig in Montgomery Cave in the near future if we can find people interested in doing the work. Apparently others, notably the Haynes Brothers, have attempted digging here in the past with no success. If you are even moderately interested in this project, call Bill Bentley or Tony Grieco, and we'll see what can be put together.

The PBSS SPYLUNK is the official publication of the Permian Basin Speleological Society, a grotto (chapter) of the National Speleological Society. Membership, which includes the newsletter, is \$4.00/year, paid to the editor (address on masthead). Material for publication should be sent to same. Republication of material contained herein by NSS publications is encouraged, others may do so with permission of the editor.