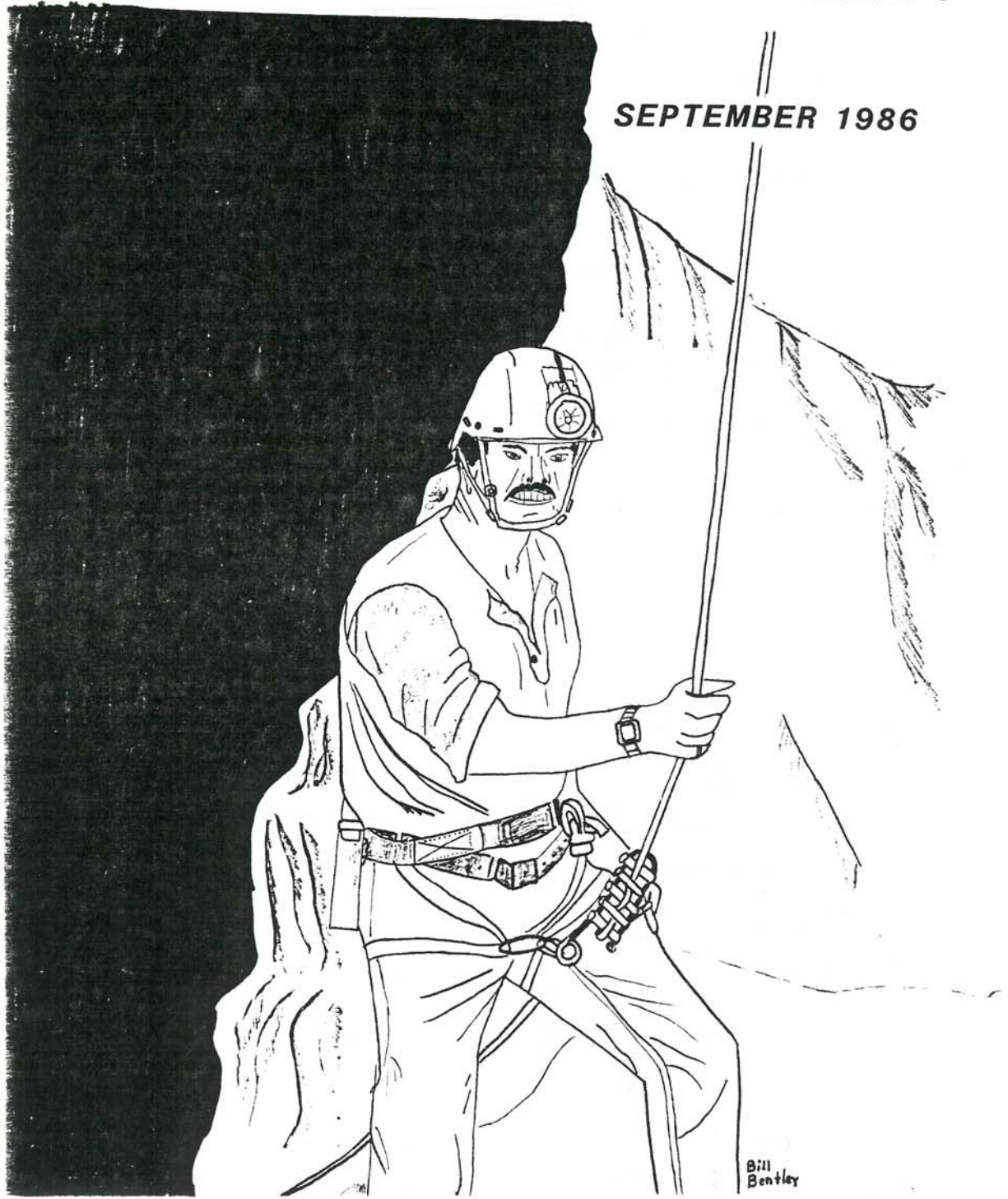


# P.B.S.S. SPYLUNK

VOLUME 3  
NUMBER 8

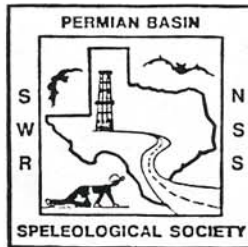
SEPTEMBER 1986



# P.B.S.S. SPYLUNK

SEPTEMBER 1986

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VOLUME 3 NUMBER 8

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## MEETING

The September meeting of the PBSS will be held THURSDAY, SEPT. 11, 7:30 PM at the home of Bill Bentley and Suzy Noldan, address on masthead. Call Bill for further information or directions. Plans are to make final preparations for the upcoming trip to Deep Cave, so if you plan to go plan to attend, or call Bill to let him know you want to go. We also need to discuss a possible schedule for 1987- if you have any caves you want to see, come to the meeting so we can try to schedule it in!

## NEWS OF NOTE

### PBSS SCHEDULE:

SEP. 13-14: DEEP CAVE  
OCT. 18-19: HIDDEN, BLACK, COTTONWOOD CAVES (PBOC TRIP)  
NOV. 8-9 : SENTINEL, BIG DOOR CAVES (PENDING PERMITS)

### YOUTH GROUP CAVING:

This editor has recently been approached as to the possibility of leading a youth group (from the LDS Church) on a caving trip, possibly to Endless Cave, tentatively scheduled for Oct. 25. In addition, I have been asked to give a presentation on caving, with the emphasis on CONSERVATION and SAFETY, at this group's monthly meeting, held around the first of Oct. I have agreed to lead this trip, but I would be grateful if any of you spylunks would want to volunteer to help out. One person should be able to handle a group of this size, but the more experienced people that we have, the better. Call me if you want to volunteer.



HEY- DO YOU REMEMBER ALL THOSE STUPID HORROR MOVIES THEY USED TO MAKE WITH PEOPLE FALLING INTO CAVES AND FINDING DINOSAURS AND STUFF...

CAVE TRIPS

SEPT. 13-14: Deep Cave- We have the permits for this cave, but the number of spaces is limited. This cave is really super, with a free drop of approximately 150 feet. Needless to say, vertical expertise is an absolute must. If you plan to attend this trip, call Bill Bentley ASAP to reserve a place on the sign up list.

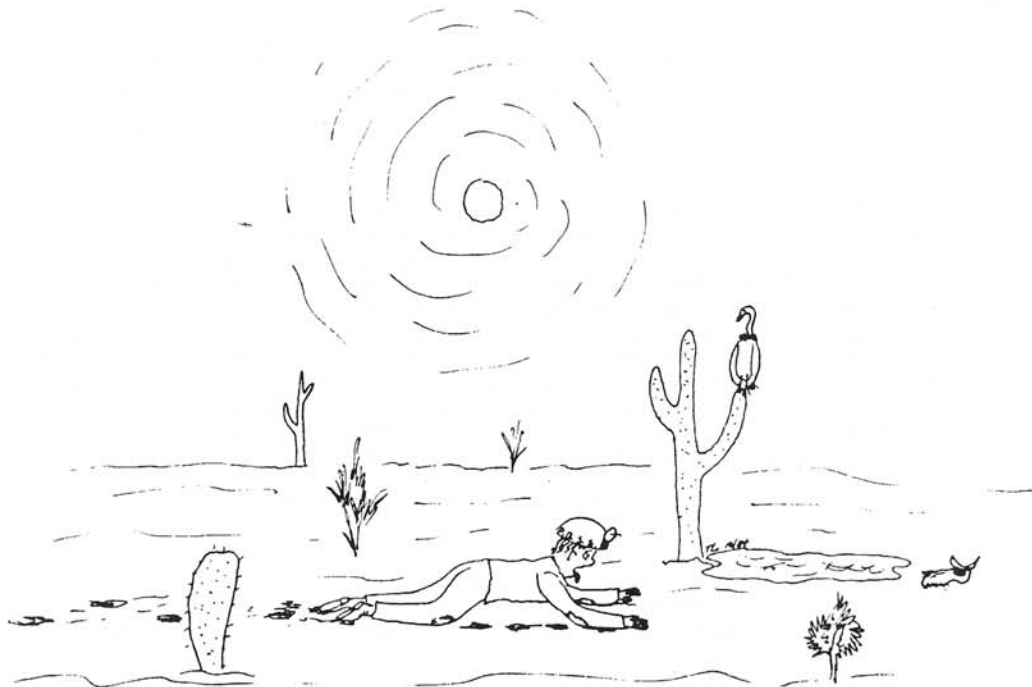
TRIP REPORTS

SAN SABA COUNTY CAVING ADVENTURE, August 15-17, 1986.

Participants: Pat Copeland, Pixie Clark, Bill Bentley, Lori Vian, Suzy Noldan, Sandra Pendergrass, Gary Pendergrass, Terry Hill, Pat Hill, Tom Hill, Joyce Hill, Erin Hill, Denice Hill and Jamie Hill (There's Hills in them thar caves... editor)  
(Report by Suzy)

In a caravan of four trucks, thirteen Midlanders headed for San Saba County after work on Friday. Our hosts, Pat and Pixie, greeted us on the back roads of a ranch near San Saba and were able to shepherd us all to the proper campsite.

The next morning we woke up to a beautiful scene next to the San Saba River. Pat and Pixie gathered together all the adults who were willing and guided us first to Travis Cave and then to Highline Cave. The entrance to Travis Cave was filled with stagnant water, which put a damper to further exploration. At Highline Cave, after rigging the 60 foot drop, Lori, Bill, Terry, Pat and I rappelled through a tight entrance filled with hundreds of spiders and crickets into a large fissure room. The caves highlights were a delightful mud pit, a mudcrack lunch room, and some cave formations. Everyone made it out of the cave and headed back to camp for lunch.



CAVE... CAVE... I MUST HAVE CAVE...

Next on the agenda was a cave trip for the kids. With Pat guiding, four adults and four kids (ages 6-12) scrambled into Roundtree Cave for an hour of initiating the uninitiated into caving. The most interesting part was trying to convince the kids that spiders and crickets are friendly little creatures, that darkness was not something to be afraid of and that getting muddy can be fun (I think that most little kids already know the last part- at least mine does... editor). They probably now think that all adults are strange. Upon returning to camp we all plunged into the water. Some of us spent several hours floating down the lazy river. Later we went to a local rodeo.

Sunday morning we all broke camp and headed on to Joe's Cave. In a caravan of four vehicles we followed Pat and Pixie's small car over hill and dale, large cows with mean eyes and finally to the cave (only their second visit). The rest of us were totally disoriented (as usual-editor). Then Pat and Pixie, armed with long sticks, led us to the entrance sink with stories of seeing a mama snake with babies a few weeks earlier. After getting past mama snake, six adults and four children crawled quickly into Joe's Cave. The cave was thankfully cool and interesting, with several rooms containing (mostly dead) cave formations, a second 30 foot pit entrance, a bat and bones of several critters.

After a brief visit to Pat Copeland's home in Brownfield, most of the crew headed on to Lake Brownfield for swimming and boating, and then home to Midland. Thank you Pat and Pixie for a wonderful weekend!

#### SUZY'S SAFETY COLUMN

Article written by Suzy Noldan.

#### PSEUDOCAVING IN OLD MINES

First, you should never go into old mines, they are a great deal more dangerous than nearly any cave. But if you have permission from the landowner, a map of the workings, and a premonition that there are gold nuggets lying in wait for you... Several weekends ago Eleanor Nestlerod, Kathy Schwere, Lori Vian and I, all geologists, went to an old gold mine with a 210 foot shaft and three levels. My job was to provide lights and gear, and rig the drops; theirs was to find gold.

Smugglers Mine is located near White Oaks, N.M. The mine was worked during the 1930's. Gold, tungsten and iron ores were mined from the host monzonite. Because the timbers and ladders in the shaft were in fair condition, we were able to use them with only a Jumar rigged to a standing line as a safety. The mine was great to explore, with all sorts of old equipment, older shafts, dead animals and (what we thought at the time) gold. After loading up shoulder bags, backpacks and pockets with samples from every nook and cranny of the mine, we headed for the surface. Once on the surface, we found that most of our 'gold' was actually phlogopite mica. Well, we may have struck out in this mine, but we had plans to explore for gold, gold, gold (my gosh, talk about 'seeing the elephant'...editor) in the south Homestake Mine, which had nine levels and a 660' shaft.

But now for the serious stuff. Here is a list of the dangers of going into an old mine:

1. Mine Owners- Always get permission or you could get shot!
2. Snakes, spiders and trapped animals.
3. Dangerous old ladders, ropes and cables (Note-you cannot tell the condition of old ladders or timbers by looking at them! Dry rot can cause a sound-looking timber to crumble in your hand!-editor)
4. Falling timbers
5. Collapsing passages (Remember, unlike a cave, a mine is a man-made opening dug

- into what, in most cases, is very fractured and unstable ground-editor)
6. Bad air (generally carbon monoxide- colorless, odorless and very deadly)
  7. Hypothermia

In summary, the best advice concerning old mines for even a good caver is- stay out of them! Even people with the training and experience (and a valid reason) to enter old workings are doing so at considerably more risk than is normally encountered in caving.

#### CORRESPONDENCE

Reproduced below is a letter which the SPYLUNK received in response to the editorial comments which were printed in the last issue.

408 Southern Sky  
Carlsbad, NM 88220  
3 August 1986

Dear Tony,

You mentioned in the latest issue of the Spylunk that "if you are an NSS member, you probably don't care about Trout Rock Cave at all....If you are not an NSS member then you probably care even less." I believe the "desined affect" [sic] you received is one you did not expect. All NSS members should have an opinion one way or the other on Society projects. After all, your dues money is being spent on this "annoying"- "we don't care" project.

I wish to inform you that your statement that the Trout Rock Cave Gate/no Gate will have no effect upon West Texas caving is wrong. Everything the Society does affects each and every one of us, West Texas or Southern California. These so called "local speleo politics" became a main issue in the Congress of Grottos (we noticed that PBSS was conspicuously absent!), Board of Governors Meetings, campfire talks, and was the primary discussion item when more than 3 cavers gathered at the NSS Convention.

I suspect that the longer you are an active NSS member the more you will see that speleo-politics are what make our organization run, be it at the national or the local level.

You also stated that the "PBSS was essentially prevented from participating" in the Lechuguilla Cave Dig and a Special Management Meeting. Let me set you straight on this issue. First of all, you received as much lead time on both issues as anyone else. Bill Greenlee and Bill Bentley were at the Cave Dig, so I'm sure the information about that was received by the PBSS. The special management meeting was announced by PUG flyer and sent specially to at least one of your members with a special notation "Please pass the word". The meeting was, agreed, on short notice, but quite a few people made it. This meeting was a PUG action management meeting, not the Forest Service. Your grotto received a copy of the resulting letter. The Carlsbad Forest Service people agreed with almost everything we suggested. [The PUG notice is normally only sent to PAID subscribers. Occasionally we go out of pocket to send special notices to unpaid groups/people, but it cuts us really short on funds, since our dues of \$3/yr barely cover individual costs]

Speleo politics is an interesting side-line to normal caving.  
Try the positive side of it sometime!

Good caving & politician!



Next is a copy of a letter sent by PVG to the USFS, giving the Forest Service the recommendations which were agreed upon at the Special Management Meeting, which was reported in the last issue of the SPYLUNK.

3007 Mountain View  
Carlsbad, NM 88220  
14 July 1986

Mr. James Abbott  
Lincoln National Forest  
Federal Building  
11th and New York  
Alamogordo, NM 88310

Dear Mr. Abbott:

Reference is made to our meeting with the National Forest Service during the 1986 NSS National Convention, in which you discussed the management issues concerning Cottonwood Cave. At that time, you requested that the local cavers make a recommendation to the NFS on our preferred management plan for this unique cave.

On July 11, 1986, a working group meeting was held by 15 of the local cavers to reach a consensus recommendation. Although there was much discussion of details, the management approach proposed had universal support of the attendees.

Cottonwood Cave is unique in that this cave's diversity reflects the need for differing management plans for different sections of the cave. We feel that this is also true for general Guadalupe cave management. Management plans for specific areas should range from minimal restrictions to highly restrictive, dependent upon the specific needs of the cave. We would welcome discussion with the NFS on management of other Guadalupe caves with respect to this observation.

A. Specifically towards Cottonwood Cave, we propose the following actions and management plan for the back sections of the cave.

1. The back sections of the cave, the Second Parallel and Wonderland sections, should be closed, until cleanup and improvements are complete, except for work trips.

2. During the cleanup period, the Second Parallel Passage and Wonderland should be cleaned up, broken formations repaired, off trail areas restored and trails established.
3. All known connections between the Wonderland section and the Second Parallel Passage should be sealed or gated.
4. Trails should be marked using the National Park Service system of "green - in" and "white - out" reflectors on stakes placed on 5-10 foot centers. The use of flagging tape or rock delineated paths is discouraged in these scenic areas. Site specific use of barriers such as rock walls or even fences should be considered to protect fragile areas. Trails and restricted areas should be surveyed and marked on the cave map.
5. Photo points for monitoring use impacts should be re-established, surveyed and shown on the cave map.

Following completion of the above actions, the Wonderland section should be reopened to regular cave permit use. The Second Parallel Passage should be reopened to NPS guided tours at a frequency consistent with availability of authorized guides.

B. Additionally, we propose the following as a management plan for the Main Corridor:

1. Refurbish the existing trail through the main corridor and locate it on the cave map.
2. Install a substantially constructed conservation and information oriented sign just inside the cave entrance. This sign may need repeated re-installation if vandalized, but would provide an opportunity for the NPS to educate the occasional cavers who frequent this section of Cottonwood. We oppose the use of printed literature which might serve as informal advertisement for the cave.
3. Establish a self-permitting process for Cottonwood's Main Corridor which allows people to obtain permits when entering the cave. This may improve the overall use monitoring of this section of the cave and is consistent with existing and historical use by unpermitted parties.

C. Concurrent with implementation of the above recommendations, we propose the following general recommendations be addressed:

1. Due to the year round caving activities in the Guadalupe, full-time Cave Management personnel should be authorized and staffed. A minimum of two is recommended, but increased support through permanent, temporary, or volunteer personnel should also be encouraged. These personnel are critical for coordinating scientific, conservation, and tour trip programs and could significantly improve volunteer participation in work trips and cave inventory programs.

2. A report summarizing significant events, programs, and management changes, as well as caver usage data, should be issued to the caving community on a semi-annual basis. This could serve as an important mechanism for soliciting input and informing cavers of proposed changes. Emphasis on volunteer based projects should be given to help keep momentum in this program. Personnel or regulatory/management plan changes could also be announced. We feel this increased level of communication would be mutually beneficial and would support upward management goals within the NFS, thereby enhancing the overall Cave Management Program.

3. Opportunities for establishing a Cooperative Agreement with local cavers and other organized groups frequenting the caves should be investigated. Formal agreements clearly establish functional responsibilities and commitments and enhance the NFS/caver relationships. Examples of agreements signed with the BLM or other NFS agencies could be used to develop the local agreement.

4. Input should be solicited and considered, such as you have currently done on Cottonwood, for the management plans for other specific caves in the Guadalupe District. Local cavers are especially concerned about the impacts on high use caves, as well as the growing usage of historically isolated and infrequently used caves and sections of caves. Management plans should be cave specific rather than of a general nature.

D. Local cavers can be expected to provide volunteer help to support the NFS as follows:

1. Local cavers will support a monthly work trip to the one Guadalupe for the next 6 months. This will support the short term needs to clean up Cottonwood Cave and will improve NFS familiarity with local cavers from the Pecos Valley Grotto.

2. If requested by the NFS, we will also solicit volunteer support from other Regional and area cavers so as to broaden the volunteer base and expedite the progress of cave cleanup/improvement goals established by the NFS.

3. During the accomplishment of this volunteer work, NFS supervisors should attempt to select and establish key individuals from the local cavers who can act as future cave guides or work trip leaders. This goal should also be supported by the establishment of Volunteer Agreements and standards.

In conclusion, we genuinely appreciate this opportunity to provide our recommendation for the management plan and actions on Cottonwood Cave. We look forward to increased communication and cooperation with the NFS with respect to the overall Guadalupe Caves Management program. We also offer volunteer support for this program in an effort to expedite accomplishment of NFS goals. Lastly, we strongly recommend the staffing of full time cave management personnel within the NFS to improve communication, coordinate volunteer programs and to enhance NFS monitoring of caver use in the Guadalupe caves.

Yours truly,

Tom Dillon  
Work Group Coordinator,  
Pecos Valley Grotto, NSS

*R. Thomas Dillon Jr.*



If anyone wants to reply in print to either of the above letters, just send your opinions to the SPYLUNK, and we'll print it in the next issue.

MISCELLANEOUS

**KUDOS:**

Kudos this month go to Suzy Noldan, for her excellent article and trip report, and to Bill Bentley for the beautiful cover drawing- which, incidentally, depicts caver Dean Jennings at the base of the drop in Ogle Cave. I would also like to thank Vicki Grieco for making up the mailing labels we are now (in most cases) using on the SPYLUNK- they are saving your overworked editor a whole bunch of time.

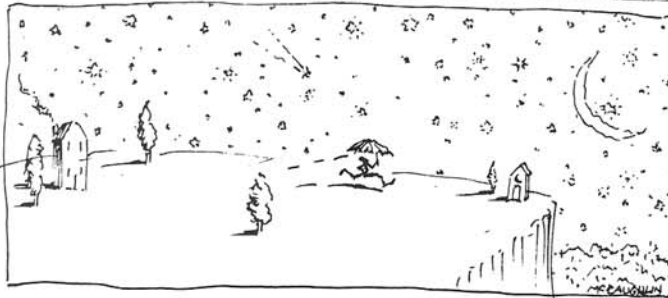
**SPELEO CARTOONS:**

Reproduced below are three cartoons (two from the Dallas Morning News and one from Science Digest) which have to do, one way or another, with caving. Also reproduced is an advertisement from the classified section of the Dallas Morning News, which, though completely unrelated to caving, contains an interesting typo- or else was placed by a guy who really likes his women 'plump'....enjoy.



CALVIN AND HOBBS

FROM CALVIN'S SPELUNKING NEWS



FROM SCIENCE DIGEST

RANDOM METEORITE ANXIETY. SO FAR AS IS KNOWN, THERE IS ONLY ONE VICTIM OF THIS PHOBIA. HE LIVES IN HILLS OF NORTHERN GEORGIA AND HAS TAKEN UP SPELUNKING.

drive, 4 spd, ps/br, am/fm  
 crss. 19K. \$10,500. 422-5412

1985 F250 Ford XL, auto, A-C,  
 ps, pb, cruise, heavy duty, 36  
 mph. \$9150. 328-8887.

MUST SELL '89 Jeep V-6, 8-ton  
 wench on front, new motor  
 Real good cond. \$2,250. 225-7953

'89 Toyota SR5, 4-Wheel, stereo,  
 mag wheels, camper top, 5  
 speed, 19K. \$9,500. 790-3300.

OFF THE LEAS.



FROM CALVIN'S SPELUNKING NEWS

"I didn't think you'd like spelunking, but do you listen to me? Heck, no."

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