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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@marshill.com>.

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Next Meeting: PBSS

Meeting Change

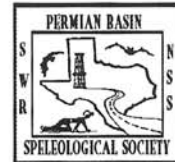
The next official meeting of the Permian Basin Speleological Society will be held on Tuesday, September 9, 1997 at 7:00 PM in Big Spring, Texas. The meeting place will be the Big Spring State Park.

Our Agenda:

- Future cave trips to New Mexico. Possible work trip to CACA.

If you need more directions or information consult the map in this publication or call our official contact person, Walter Feaster

@ (915)559-3297, or (915)694-1824. E-Mail: <waltfeast@marshill.com>



"PBSS Home Page"

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

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

Check Out Mr. Bill's "Caver Net"

http://www.caver.net

Look up Mr. Bill's "CAVER NET USERS PAGE"

http://www.caver.net/users.htm (A directory of Caver E-Mail address)

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

September 12-14 & 19-21, National Cave Rescue Commission Seminar-Level 1 & 2: For more info contact John Green @ (512)282-6316 or <tazcaver@aol.com>.

October 12-18, Lincoln National Forest, Capitan Area Expedition: This is a CRF Project. Contact Dick Venter @ (505)892-7370

October 17-19, Texas Cavers' Reunion: Location to be announced.

November 27-29, CRF Carlsbad Caverns Thanksgiving Day Expedition: Contact Barbe Barker (972)594-1183 or <cavers@gte.net>.

December ?, 1997 SWR Winter Technical Regional (indoor) Las Cruces, New Mexico (meeting/session location to be determined) Hosted and organized by the Mesilla Valley Grotto. First or second Saturday in December. Business meeting scheduled for 9AM. Technical paper presentations follow business meeting. If you wish to attend, want to present a paper, or need additional information, contact: Steve Peerman <speerman@chilidog.lascruces.nmhs.edu>.

### PBSS Welcomes New Members

PBSS welcomes three new members to our grotto. Mike Gray and Arlon Carroll both from Odessa, Tx. and both of them are pilots. Also joining is Ron Alton who is the Superintendent of the Big Spring State Park, where we will be meeting this month. Hope to meet you then.

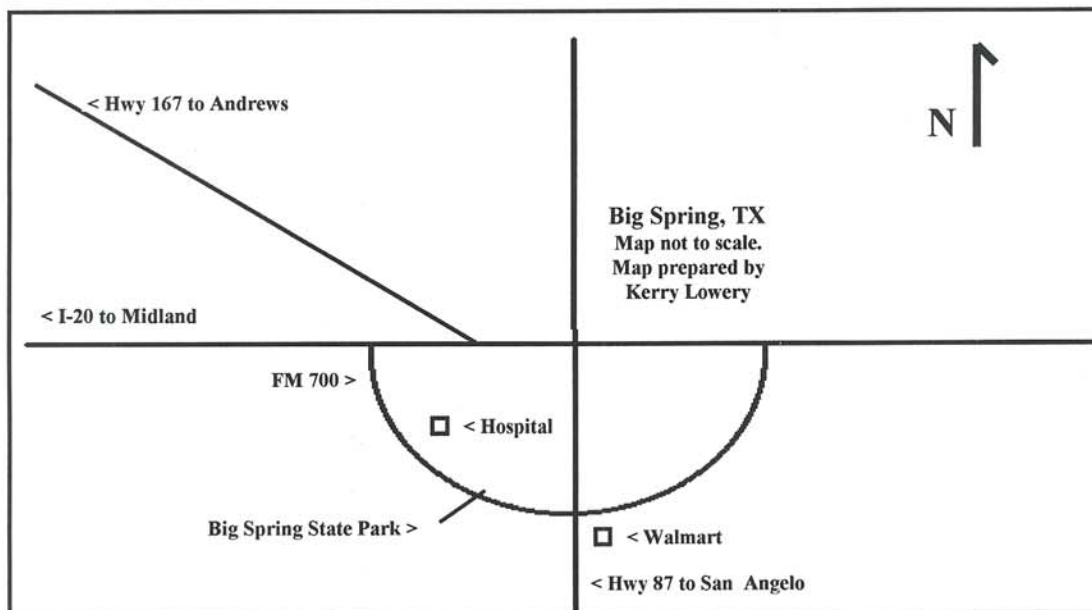
To all welcome aboard!!

### September's PBSS Meeting:

The next meeting of The Permian Basin Speleological Society will be held at the Big Spring State Park, Big Spring, Texas. Meeting time is 7:00 PM. It does cost \$2.00 to get in, and we all need to obey State Park rules.

Mr. Lowery informs us that there is a small cave in the park. So you might want to bring a helmet and lights. He says it shouldn't take long to see all the cave.

Below is a map of how to get to Big Spring State Park.



## TRIP REPORTS: and other lies and stories



### Caving in Hardeman County July 19, 1997

Caves: Little Crystal, Walk Up and Lady's Descent Caves.

Cavers: Bryan, Brandon, Megan, and Claire Alley, Gary Mahan, Tom and Rebecca Kaler.

Lady's Descent Cave- Bill Sawyer, Dave Milhollon, Tom and Rebecca Kaler.

The North Texas Speleological Society has regular access to a few caves near Quanah and every time an N.T.S.S. member meets a new caver an invitation is always extended. Since joining this group, Tom and I are now well on our way to becoming regulars of these caves which overlook the Pease River in Hardeman County. The caving this day consisted of Little Crystal Cave, Walk Up Cave, and Lady's Descent Cave. I'll spare repeating myself and skip a report on Little Crystal since I reported on it in the February issue of "The Hole News."

We entered one of the many entrances of Walk Up Cave which was just a short climb down in to the void. Gary Mahan instantly became our leader and led us to a pool which no one wanted to enter. Gary quickly popped in to a passage he said was the by pass to the pool. We all followed him like those proverbial lambs and soon were beneath a skylight thirty feet above us and covered with bats.

The next thing I knew bats were bouncing off of me one after the other. This is a strange sensation for those who are not used to being bombarded by flying, furry creatures. Somehow the bats had been disturbed before we got there. Carefully we pressed through the whirlwind of bats and suddenly found ourselves on the other side of the pool we supposedly bypassed. Mindful of the bats, we turned around and went back through the flurry to the passage we intended to take.

This passage is a water passage with one calf deep pool leading via a stream to another pool. On each side of the passage a narrow, shelf like ledge follows the walls tempting the naive cavers to shuffle across without getting wet. Well, I stayed dry past the first pool anyway.

Despite the various decomposition of dead bats littering the passage, it reminded me of the Parks Ranch Cave. There are few formations and a lot of graffiti but this cave hasn't been known for its purity. Finally we journeyed in to another room with a huge skylight and here is where the graffiti became offensive. Still the bats were swirling around us. We fell to our knees, crawled through a low but wide passage and quickly were out of the cave. This is a fun though slightly technical cave to explore and the wet passage was a welcome relief on a hot, summer day.

Walk Up's tragic past is sad and plans to gate this local, party cave are in the works. It might be suggested that all visitation cease while there are so many bats in the cave. These bats have endured so much human interference and destruction (i.e. being set on fire) that they probably deserve a break.

Anxious to do more caving, I suggested that the group visit Lady's Descent. A vertical entrance of about twelve feet should make for an easy, quick little caving jaunt. Did I say easy and quick? Hiking an uncertain distance in 90 to 100 degree temperatures with a pack full of vertical gear will not qualify for easy and quick as everyone on this trip found out. Some cavers found themselves short of water and when we reached the cave opted not to go in, rested while the rope was being rigged, and decided to head back to the vehicles.

Bill, Dave, Tom and I descended the rope on to a muddy floor. After a short search for the passage in to the cave, Bill, Tom and I slithered in to the cave's huge and oh so cold room. Dave's light was going out and he didn't have a spare so he sat in the twilight zone and enjoyed the air conditioning while we pushed on. Our caving party was shrinking fast.

A bold band of shale cuts through the cave's wall and a few small crystals have grown in a place but a growth on the ceiling caught the interest of these two imaginative men. A certain part of the ceiling dipped down in such a way as to resemble, "Venus' breast," Bill explained but I couldn't see the resemblance. Breakdown covers the floor and mud holds it together in a slick combination.

At the end of the large passage, a wall comes down leaving only a crawl space. Bill peered in and saw something move. That was all it took for him and me. However, Tom crawled in and eventually saw a mouse. Bill swore it wasn't a mouse he saw and I believed him. I generally trust my husband's integrity unless it means I could possibly get eaten by something. Tom didn't want to go any farther if no one was going to follow him. Previously Melienc Davis said she had been through that crawl and it led to a sump. I believed her too.

We meandered around the room before surrendering our caving experience to time and the fact that a group of people were waiting for us. We swiftly climbed the rope, packed our gear, and hiked back to the vehicles dreaming of beer and pizza along the way.

This area of Hardeman County is intriguing, beautiful, and fun. There are most likely more caves waiting for the N.T.S.S. group to find and when they do, they won't hesitate to invite the world to see them. But until then, they'll just remain proud of their Quanah babies. Submitted by Rebecca Lee-Kaler NSS# 42075