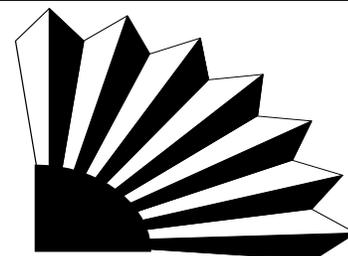
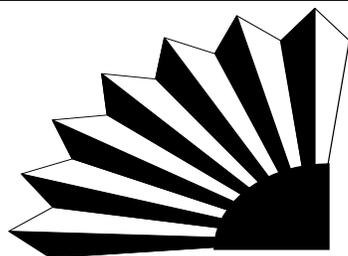


The Hole News

January 1997





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Chartered 1984 as the 300th Grotto of the National Speleological Society

Volume 12 Number 1

THE MONTHLY PUBLICATION OF THE PERMIAN BASIN SPELEOLOGICAL

"The Hole News" is edited on Pentium P5 -133 MHz IBM compatible personal computer utilizing Microsoft Publisher 97 desktop publishing program. The editor will accept modem transfer (28.8kb N81) or 3 1/2 floppy disks with *.txt, .pub, .rtf, .doc, .wps, and .wri formats for trip reports and *.bmp, .pcx, .tif, .pcd, .gif, .tga, .clp, .cut, .dib, .iff, .img, .jas, .jif, .jpg, .lbn, .mac, .msp, .pic, .rle, .wmf, .wpg, and .cdr formats for graphics. However typed or handwritten submissions as well as hand drawn graphics are also welcome. All are greatly appreciated. Contact the editor @ 915-559-3297 after 8 p.m. Fax line and voice mail @ (915)694-1824, any time. E-mail:



Next Meeting: PBSS

The next official meeting of the Permian Basin Speleological Society will be held on **Tuesday, January 14, 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

Mr. Bill Martin will be presenting a short class on *knot tying* at our Jan. meeting.

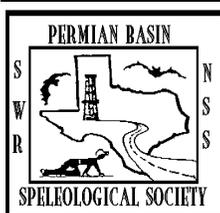
Rock hauling at CACA. Please read the article on the next page.

PBSS membership dues are due now. If you haven't paid, January will be your last newsletter.

If you need more directions or information call our official contact person, Walter Feaster @ 915-559-3297, or 694-1824.

"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, 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.

HAVE
A
HAPPY NEW YEAR



PBSS Dues

The following members have not renewed for 1997. This will be your last "Hole News"!

Abernathy Anderle Abner Day Franks L.Gray Parent.



PBSS Home Page

<http://www.apex2000.net/personal/bb2145/pbss.htm>

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

***** January 25, 1997 *Amazing Maze Cave*: Contact Gralin Coffin @915-682-1904 or Walter Feaster @ 915-559-3297 or 915-694-1824. *****

***** March 1, 1997 *PBSS Restoration at CACA*: Rock hauling at Carlsbad Caverns. There is still room. Contact Walter Feaster @ 915-559-3297 or 915-694-1824. *****

Most all of this material was stolen from various and sometimes reliable caving newsletters in the Southwestern Region and surrounding area, including the TSA’s “Activities Newsletter”

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

- Carlsbat Cavers: Contact Phyllis Weston @ 505-887-6790 for restoration, educational programs, off trail trips.
- Amazing Maze: TCMA cave. Contact Gralin Coffin @915-682-1904, or Walter Feaster @ 915-559-3297 or 915-694-1824.
- Colorado Bend State Park: Contact Ed Young 915-682-3449 or Terry Holsinger 512-443-4241 or Dale Barnard 512-452-5709.
- Fitton Cave Survey: Contact Pete Lindsley @ 214-727-2497 or e-mail lindsley@mcopn.dseg.ti.com
- Government Canyon Karst Project: Contact George Veni 210-558-4403 or e-mail kveni@tent.edu
- Honey Creek Cave: Contact Mark Minton 512-847-7422.
- Madonna Restoration Trips: Contact Mike Huber @ 505-885-8898.
- Mystic Cave Survey: Contact Woodrow Thomas @ 903-395-4431 or e-mail wwthomas@tenet.edu
- 0-9 Well: TCMA cave. Contact Walter Feaster @ 915-559-3297 or 915-694-1824. (CLOSED UNTIL NEXT SPRING).
- Powell’s Cave Survey: Contact Terry Holsinger @ 512-443-4241.
- Robber Baron Cave: TCMA cave. Contact James Loftin @ 210-731-9392.
- Whirlpool and Lost Oasis: TCMA caves. Contact Nico Hauwert @ 512-282-8441.

IF YOU HAVE ANY CAVING TRIPS PLANNED, PLEASE LET THE EDITOR KNOW AND HE WILL PUBLISH THEM HERE IN THIS SPACE!.....

★Read This★

Rock Hauling at CACA

Our restoration expedition at Carlsbad Caverns has been moved back a few weeks. It has been moved from February 15, to **March 1, 1997**. Due to a conflicting schedule with the NPS the date had to be changed. I apologize for the inconvenience.

There is still room if you would like to attend. Contact Walter Feaster or come to our next meeting.

New Cave Rescue Numbers

- U.S.A. 1-800-692-0234
- MEXICO 1-210-686-0234 (call collect)
- NEW MEXICO, U.S.A. Try “911” First

PBSS Welcomes New Member

PBSS welcomes Tom Kaler to our grotto. Tom is from Cross Plains, Texas, and has been past President and newsletter editor of the Central Texas Grotto.

Welcome aboard Tom.

Wally Caver →→→→

This is a caricature of myself (Walter) created by a co-worker, Gary Smith, a non-caver I might add.

Mr. Smith has a very unique talent. I do think my belly is a little higher than my sandels. Oh yes, that is a soft drink can in my left hand!!



Cave Long and Prosper. Walter Feaster NSS#31624

TRIP REPORTS: and other lies and stories



McKittrick Hill Cave Trip Aug. 30- Sept. 1, 1996

Caves: ABC Cave, Endless Cave, Sand Cave

Cavers: Central Texas Grotto and Rebecca Lee

This trip didn't start out too well. I was supposed to caravan with three other people to McKittrick Hill but a miscommunication in the time to meet caused me to have to drive to New Mexico alone. That night, the hill received one of the worst thunderstorms it ever had causing the unfortunate tent dwellers to abandon their soggy homes. But, Saturday morning the clouds went away and we were ready to start our Labor Day weekend of caving.

One of the reasons I went on this trip was to go to a cave Jeff Bauknecht and some other cavers dug into in 1988. Now, only the finders of ABC cave can lead trips through the cave and for us that was Jeff and his wife Mary Anne. The B.L.M. was only allowing two trips that weekend. I was on the first trip. There was a gate over the entrance but vandals had blown it off and really made a mess of the entrance. Concrete and bars were scattered. The B.L.M. placed a board over the entrance and covered it with dirt and rocks. We knew we were going to have to remove the dirt and rocks but we weren't expecting to find what we found. The previous storms had caused the entrance hole to fill with mud. It looked like it was going to take us all day to dig it open. We headed to camp to gather whatever tools we could and ended up with three shovels and a bucket.

Alvis Hill volunteered to do the digging first and I volunteered to go down and empty the buckets. The farther we got in, the more I needed someone to get the buckets from me. Pat Copeland volunteered for this job. About six bucket loads later, Alvis said the passage was open and that he and I could make it through with no problem. Jeff asked him to make it a little larger so that everyone could easily make the squeeze (I'm not mentioning names!). When the dig was done, we went to camp to change clothes and shoes. We returned to the cave, donned our coveralls (required for the muddy entrance crawls) and finally began caving. We were the first cavers to legally enter this cave in three years.

We crawled and crawled before reaching the area where Jeff wanted us to leave our coveralls and muddy shoes. Some people were wearing soot suits which were shredding nicely. We had to pick up the pieces of the suits on the way out.

Jeff was extremely cautious as he led us through. This cave is his baby and it showed. But that's a good thing. We saw a variety of fantastic formations like a rimstone dam that resembled the Great Wall, a stalactite that created a throne beneath it, unbroken vents looking like snowballs on the floor, and the Shangri La room. Jeff was beaming with pride as he showed us this room. It is a room of sloping, multicolored rimstone dams. It's spectacular! This cave rarely allows anyone to stand up and the better your knee pads, the more you enjoy the cave. With elbow pads, I would have been in heaven.

ABC Cave is gated now so hopefully any future trips will involve a little less work and a little more caving. But everyone on our trip agreed that the work was part of caving and it was an honor to get it done.

Later that evening, we went to Endless Cave. Due to the fact that everybody but one had been there before, we were able to find the pretties and exit the cave in two hours. A quick trip but a good one.

Sunday morning, we went to Sand Cave. Once again, everybody but one had previously been to this cave. Slim Baxter rigged the handline to go down the short pit to the Sandy Floored Room (the quick way to get there). However, Mary Anne Bauknecht who doesn't do anything on rope decided she didn't want to try to use the hand line to go down. I remembered when I was previously there, our group found another way to get to the bottom but I wasn't sure I could find it. She decided she would stay at top. When I got to the bottom via the rope, I searched around for the other way to get down there and with some exploration Melynn Conway and I found it. We ushered Mary Anne toward the bottom. However, it too had a steep climb, was dripping with water and very slick. I wasn't sure Mary Anne would try the climb but Melynn and I showed it to her. She said she remembered going that way before but she just wasn't up to it that day. So, Melynn went down the climb to meet Pat Copeland and Slim while I took Mary Anne back to the entrance of the cave. Then, I used the handline to go back down.

When I met Pat and Slim, Melynn wasn't there. We started to look for her when suddenly we heard, "Pat! Pat! My light went out!" Just as we had started toward the sound of her voice, we saw a light come around a corner. It was Melynn. Apparently as soon as I had left her to take Mary Anne back, Melynn's light went out and she sat in the dark trying not to panic. She fiddled with her light as she waited and just as suddenly as it went out, it came back on. "Where were her other sources of light?" you ask. Well, she had to leave her pack with Pat in order to get up the steep, wet climb. I had my pack so it was okay until we separated when I took Mary Anne back to the entrance. Moral of this long story- Carry three sources of light no matter what! Heard that before?

We toured the sights and sighed at the tragic stalagmite mining that had left stumps on the floor before muscling ourselves up the handline and exiting the cave. It was a fun trip.

Later that day, some people went to Sitting Bull Falls and some went to Helen's Cave. I went to Helen's Cave and that alone was an adventure reluctantly recounted in yet another long trip report.

More Trip Reports:

COBB CAVERN TRIP DECEMBER 14, 1996

Cave: Cobb Cavern, Williamson County, Texas.

Cavers: Tom Kaler, Pat Copeland, Dawn and Alvis Hill, Wayne Hill, Christy Quintana, and Rebecca Lee.

I had always heard and been told that caving in Cobb Cavern is muddy, very muddy. But really, how much mud could there be?

Cobb Cavern is the Central Texas Grotto's baby. Since the recent purchase of this cave by a man who mostly wanted the land, they have been doing a lot of hard work in this cave for him. Members of the C.T.G. have just about removed all remnants of the cave's commercial days. And now, they are focusing on the cleanup of formations spotted and stained with muddy hand and foot prints from those less conscientious cavers. I was lucky enough to finally get to join in this unique restoration experience.

Saturday morning I donned my coveralls, grabbed my pack full of cleaning water, plastic sheets, sponges, and brushes, and headed with the group down the stairs to the depths of the cave. My first steps in were echoed by that sound of shoes sticking to the floor in a movie theatre. Only, it was boots sticking to the muddy floor of the cave. I call it mud but as I was so politely informed by Tom Kaler, it's clay.

We trailed over several sheets of white plastic that are artistically decorated with bright red boot prints. Farther in, we encountered a few, tight crawls that really made the importance of the plastic sheets hit home. The sheets cover the vicious rocks and clinging, soupy clay. If you're energetic, you can belly slide through the passages like you would a water tunnel at Wet 'N Wild. But, the heat in the cave generally sucks the energy out of most. A little farther and we reached our destination of work.

After changing to clean clothes, everyone grabbed a bottle of water, a brush, a sponge, and a spray bottle and slipped away in different directions to find that one formation in dire need of cleaning. I found one, then another, then another, and I worked as did the rest of the group for several hours. When the water we carried in ran out, we stopped work and Alvis led Christy, Wayne, and me on a tour of what is called, "The back of the cave."

While I was cleaning, I noticed that this cave has a lot of fantastic formations but it is no where near the comparison to Sonora that I had heard. However, when I saw the back of the cave, my opinion changed. Cobb is a helectite paradise, a popcorn heaven, and a dolomite Utopia. The formations I saw in this cave I have not seen the likes of in any other. It is a delicate cave with a strong impact. With a foggy lens, I snapped pictures with every step I took.

There are helectites every where and now I understand the unanimous comparison to Sonora. There is a group of three, one foot columns covered in helectites like a porcupine. There are numerous fish tails, and even a helectite that looks remarkably like an anchor hanging from the ceiling. In one standing passage, Alvis squatted down and directed our attention to a void under the wall of the passage. We were amazed at what the void held. It is littered with thin soda straws so dense that no one could enter. I could surely go on with descriptions. It is a truly a beautiful cave.

We returned to the site and met Tom still cleaning. The others exited the cave and I stayed with Tom a little longer as he finished his work and stowed the tools. Then, we left. When we emerged, we looked like chocolate covered people. I had to abandon my attempt to keep my camera clean in the cave I will probably never get the clay out of it. And of course, the red stain will never come out of my clothes. I'm still finding bits of clay in the oddest places. Later, Tom led a small group of us through the commercial part of the cave, a clean but unimpressive part.

This was a very entertaining trip from Friday night's meteor shower to Saturday night dinner at the cave owner's restaurant. It was made very clear to me that when cavers enter a cave there is a significant impact. In the case of Cobb Cavern, the impact is great. No matter how hard one tries, there is no way to keep from spreading the clay and damaging formations. Fortunately, access to this cave is becoming more restricted. However, I am truly glad I was able to see this neat cave and I will regard it as one of the best I've seen.

I would like to extend a special thanks to Tom Kaler for doing such a good job with organizing the trip, gathering cleaning tools, leading the restoration, and having a genuine interest in the well being of this cave. Thank you Tom.

Submitted by Rebecca Lee NSS# 42075

More Trip Reports:

INNER SPACE CAVERN TRIP DECEMBER 15, 1996

Cave: Inner Space Cavern, Georgetown, Texas.

Cavers: Tom Kaler and Rebecca Lee.

Having finished a restoration trip at Cobb Cavern the previous day, Tom Kaler and I decided to do the tourist thing and patronize Inner Space Cavern. Apparently tickets sales have been slowing and at 12:00 P.M. we were the first customers of the day. Later, some other people paid to cave and all 8 of us hopped quickly on to the cablecar for our descent in to the cave. Once inside, the 72 degrees warmed our winter chilled bones and we were ready for the tour to begin. Our guide was all of sixteen, no, I'm showing my age, she was seventeen.

Our guide led us from room to room eagerly reciting the text of the cave's history and idiosyncrasies. One such idiosyncrasy was the way the cave had of performing sound and light shows in the "Lake of the Moon" room and the Outer Cathedral. They are somewhat tasteless yet nostalgic since they have been incorporated in the cave tours for many years. They are clear examples of a cave owner's influence on a cave.

The rooms are heavily decorated and pleasing to the eye but I felt a lack of awe. The cave's display of prehistoric animal bones is interesting and the story of the cave's finding in 1963 is inspiring. I can only imagine the excitement of the highway construction workers as they accidentally tapped in to this vast cave. Nonetheless, I was never able to forget that I was in a commercialized cave. The blue lights surely would not let me forget that.

It is a pretty cave and well worth visiting. The previous night's rain really had the formations shining and dripping. It's not as good as Caverns of Sonora but immensely better than Cascade Cavern and Wonder Cave. I've heard there is a lot of off trail passage and possibly passage yet to be seen. But, it's heavily protected. So for now, wide eyed explorers will just have to stay firmly planted on the trail. As wide as the trail is, that shouldn't be too hard.

Submitted-by Rebecca Lee NSS# 42075



Inner Space Caverns, Texas

MEMBERS OF THE PERMIAN BASIN SPELEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

NAME:	ADDRESS:		NSS #:
Abernathy, Tony ?	4415 Parkdale, Midland, Tx. 79703	915-685-3119	38776
Anderle, Chuck ?	5707 County Road 57 East, Midland, Tx. 79705	915-264-0023	31477
Abner, Rich ?	1502 Pennsylvania, Big Spring, Tx 79720-4250	314-519-9081	Applied For
Bandy, Michael W.	15209 Country Ridge DR., Chesterfield, Mo. 63017	915-697-3079	Applied For
Bentley, Bill	400 Eastwood Dr., Midland, Tx. 79703-5308	915-697-3079	21977
Bentley, Donnie	400 Eastwood Dr., Midland, Tx. 79703-5308	915-687-4352	37549
Carlton, Don	1301 Daventry, Midland, Tx 79705	915-685-5094	30417
Carouth, Dutch *	6300 C. R. 55 E. , Midland, Tx 79705	915-682-1904	Applied For
Coffin, Gralin	910 W. Kansas, Midland, Tx. 79701 6124	214-412-1632	33471
Cullen, James R.	8330 Endicott Lane, Dallas, Tx. 75227	915-523-9665	Applied for
Day, Rick ?	114 N.W. Ave. "F" Street, Andrews, TX. 79714	915-559-3297	Applied for
Feaster, Walter	4307 Harvard, Midland, Tx. 79703-4847-71	915-683-3305	31624
Franks, Steve ?	422 W. Pecan Apt D, Midland, Tx. 79705	915-523-9772	35245
Glasson, Larry	1101 N. W. 7th Street, Andrews, Texas 79714	915-653-3823	Applied For
Gray, Larry ?	31 East 33rd Street, San Angelo, Tx. 76903	915-264-7619	19588
Gray, Steve	106 Canyon, Big Spring 79720	505-393-5604	Applied For
Grieco, Tony	1221 East Llano, Hobbs, NM. 88240	915-524-6327	Expired
Hogan, Felder	P.O. Box 341, Andrews, Tex 79714	817-725-7583	41068
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Kamon, Ken	4400 Andrews Hwy # 801, Midland, Tx. 79703	915-695-0793	34637
Lee, Rebecca	3217 Heritage Lane, Abilene, Texas 79606-3317	915-394-4230	42075
Lowery, Kerry	P.O. Box 39, Coahoma, Texas 79511	915-264-9246	41518
Metcalf, Ruel	1410 E. 4th, Big Spring, Tx. 79720	915-523-9294	Applied For
Pando, Noel D.	1204 Alpine, Andrews, Tx. 79714	915-523-9294	39037
Pando, Noel M.	1204 Alpine, Andrews, Tx. 79714	512-280-2843	Applied For
Parent, Larence ?	P.O. Box 849, Manchaca, Tx. 78652	915-394-4310	Applied For
Wallace III, Warren	P.O. Box 382, Coahoma, Tx 79511-0832		Applied For
* denotes new members			
	PNONE #: 915-694-7919		

Please send all exchanges, correction, and updates to Walter Feaster, 4307 Harvard, Midland, Texas 79703-4847-71. Use of this list is for members and cave related functions only and should not be used for commercial purposes. *Members with a ? beside there names have not yet renewed for 1997.*

