



October 2001

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

Volume 16 Number 10

THE MONTHLY PUBLICATION OF THE PERMIAN BASIN SPELEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Next Meeting of the PBSS:

The next official meeting of the Permian Basin Speleological Society will be held **Tuesday, October 9**, around **7:00 PM**, in the back meeting room of Murray's Delicatessen. Murray's is located at 3211 West Wadley, Midland, Texas.

Our Agenda:

Meeting

We will be taking nominations for 2002 Grotto Officers

Grotto Election in November

If you need more directions or information call our official contact person,
Walter Feaster (915)559-3297, or E-Mail:
<wfeaster@home.com> or <wfeaster@texascavers.com>.

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"PBSS Home Page"

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

Built and Maintained by *Bill Bentley*



Future Cave Trips, Events, and Projects:

October 19, 20, 21-Texas Cavers Reunion : Location map and info in this newsletter.

*****November 17,18-PBSS Trip to McKittrick Hill**: Barry Hays will have permits for McKittrick and Endless Caves Nov. 17-18. Contact Barry at <barrdonn@prodigy.net> or (915)333-8856 if you would like to go.*****

November 17-18 Caverns of Sonora Restoration Project: For more info go to the TSA web site <www.texascavers.com/tsa/sonorar.htm>.

*****Denotes a PBSS Grotto Trip*****

Due to permit restrictions or other limitations Grotto members have priority.

On Going Projects:

CRF- -Carlsbad Caverns: Expeditions usually occur on holiday weekends. Contact Barbe Barker <cloudcaver@pvtnetworks.net> or (505) 687-4270. Or possibly CRF website -www.cave-research.org.

High Guads Restoration Project (HGRP): Upcoming events will take place the last weekend of each month. For more info contact Susan Herpin (505)785-2423 or <sherpin@caverns.com>.

PBSS Rock Hauling At Carlsbad Caverns: PBSS on going restoration in the Big Room of Carlsbad Caverns. Tentative dates for 2001 are (as you know this can change): **Dec. 8**. Contact Walter Feaster at <wfeaster@home.com>.



Break Through at Ft. Stanton Cave

Recently cavers digging in Ft. Stanton Cave made a discovery of some new passages. One of our grotto members, Andrew Grieco, was on the break through team. According to sources there is passage as far as caver lamps will shine! The region of the new discovery is in the Priority 7 area.

This October 6-13 cavers will be exploring and surveying this new area and enlarging and stabilizing the crawl way. The bat dig is still on going and several other projects in the cave and on the surface are scheduled. If you are interested contact Dick Venters at <rventers@aol.com>.

"ANDREW"! It would be nice to have some kind of trip report or tall tale to read about.

PBSS:

I would like to remind everyone that we will be taking nominations for **2002 grotto officers** at our October meeting. Be thinking about who you want to officiate our grotto for the next year. After we pick the candidates I will mail the voting ballots out in the November newsletter. Please vote.

Also it is that time of year again. "**Grotto Dues**". You can pay your dues anytime from now till the end of the year.

Thank you,
Secretary/Treasurer
Walter Feaster

We Have Been Invited To: Fifteenth Maverick Grotto Anniversary Party

The fifteenth anniversary party and Grotto fall party will be held October 5, 6., and 7. This years party is on private property, so there aren't camping fees or fees of any sort. The location is Near Hells Gate on Possum Kingdom Like. It's a little further than we usually go but due to the privacy and lack of fees, it's worth it. It's about an hour and a half from Ft. Worth (see directions and maps) and probably two-hours and fifteen minutes for most Dallas folks.

If you would like to attend or need more info and direction go to <www.maverickgrotto.batcave.net>.

Junction Cave- El Malpais National Monument

On August 6, 2001, Tom Kaler and I ventured deep into the underground world of Junction Cave. Junction Cave, located in the El Calderon Area of El Malpais National Monument in New Mexico, is really a lava tube.

As most cavers know (or you will by the end of this report), lava tubes form when the surface of a lava flow from a volcano cools and forms a crust of hardened lava. This insulates the lava below, which continues to flow. When this lava drains out and the magma chamber empties, a lava tube is created. Time and erosion causes a portion of the ceiling to collapse and with that an entrance is born.

No permits are required to visit the tubes in El Malpais. Only a park brochure for locations is needed. The trail to Junction Cave is about .10 mile so that there was no time to relish the scenery or get poked by a cactus. However, a longer hike to the El Calderon Cinder Cone is available.

Junction Cave spans about .25 mile and drops to at least 100 feet below the surface. It's littered with boulders fallen from the ceiling at a time long before we got there. Well, we hoped. And there never is any flat-floor walking.

We found a few small "lavacicles," tiny stalactite-like lava formations, dangling from the ceiling. But I think the highlight of the trip was the muddy bath we encountered deeper in the tube. As we crawled like babies through a sticky, muddy passageway, I had visions of caving in Texas. While I basked in the memories, I suddenly felt a helmet cracking force on the top of my head before the room began to spin. No, it wasn't a boulder. It was one of those times when a caver is reminded why she wears a helmet-because the ceiling sometimes gets in the way. If I hadn't been wearing a helmet, someone would've had to carry me out.

Other than feeling a slight headache after the bashing, I am OK. Although every once in awhile I hear voices and howl uncontrollably. I'm sure I'll get over itWho said that?

Anyway, exploring Junction Cave took an hour at most but it was an hour worth spending. There are many other lava tubes in the area so we plan to return to El Malpais some day. Only this time, I think I'll be a little more careful but if any thoughts of Texas pop into my head I'm in trouble. Hoowwwllll!- Rebecca Lee

CAVERNS OF SONORA RESTORATION PROJECT

November 17-18, 2001

The Sonora Restoration this year is set for the above date. If you need more info or would like to get on the waiting list go to the TSA web site at <www.texascavers.com/tsa/sonorar.htm> and you should find all the info you need. Remember, if you sign up and have to cancel, please contact George Veni.

TEXAS CAVERS REUNION

The **24th** Annual Texas Cavers Reunion is scheduled for the **19th-21st** of October at Horseshoe Ranch, named for a large bend in the San Marcos river about 10.4 miles southeast of Luling. It is roughly 8.6 river miles downstream from Palmetto State Park. The site is a private ranch so this year's access is a unique opportunity to see a part of the state nearby, but unknown to most.

Camping will be in an area of 30+ acres filled with very large pecan trees. Lots of possibilities for hanging tarps, parachutes and such. No more bent tent stakes from trying to drive them into rock. HEBS and Wal-Marts in Luling, Gonzales and Seguin are within 20 minutes drive.

Bring your canoe or kayak!

Directions will be posted as more than just gps waypoints - maps ect., will be available soon. And of course there will be signs to follow. The purpose of TCR is to bring cavers together for a weekend of shared fun and excitement in order to benefit your individual caving habit and the TSA. More info at < www.texascavers.com/tsa/tcr.htm>.

