the texas cover

a magazine written by and for cavers

Government Canyon
karst project update

Colorado Bend
2013-14 review

C-23
LAG checks in

TSA
meeting minutes

2014 - Volume 62, Issue 2/3

FUN AND KIDS DAY IN ROBBER BARON

Sid Formanek

On June 7, several GHG cavers headed to San Antonio's Robber Baron Cave for a fun beginner trip with several little ones in tow.

After saying hello to Joe and Evelyn and other Bexar Grotto members, we headed down the stairs, and through the duck-under entrance into the cave. It was fun watching the young people enjoying the experience and seeing what good parents Texas cavers are.

After a little while Ray and I set out to explore at an adult pace and were having a fabulous but breathtaking time. It hadn't occurred to me that we were experiencing the effects of bad air; I figured my huffing and puffing had to do with being old and out of shape. We continued a little further and I took a little break while the guys checked out some more cave.

Getting hungry, we headed out and visited with everyone topside for awhile. Then some of us went back in once more before facing the long ride home. A huge thanks to Peter Dreuske for letting me ride share. I was quite impressed with how well behaved his son, Willem, was.

TOP: Not sure if Emma Tiu is sleepy on her first caving trip, or just bored. BOTTOM: Houston cavers (mostly) prepare to head into Robber Baron. Photos by Lyndon Tiu

Joe Mitchell

When the Houston Grotto said they wanted to have a beginners trip to Robber Baron, it seemed like a good time to invite a couple of folks with children who had previously expressed an interest in taking them into the cave. Before I knew it, the event had turned into a big Fun and Kids Day in Robber Baron. Somehow word got around that this was also an Open House, so I had to put a quick stop to that! Still, quite a crowd showed up: thirteen kids and thirty adults - at least ten of which were from Houston. Several Bexar Grotto folks showed up to help out.

We broke up into two groups – the kids spent time exploring the front of the cave as far as the Graffiti Room, while the other groups ventured to deeper parts of the cave. The kids had a great time climbing and crawling, though a few had to get over the nervousness of it being their first time underground. Snacks and water were provided on the surface and some folks went back for a 2nd round. Everyone did great and the trip proved again that you can never be too young to cave!

the texas caver

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Articles, announcements, artwork, photos, and material for publication are ALWAYS welcome and may be sent at anytime to the Editor.

All submissions must be submitted to the Editor in electronic form, either via **DropBox**, or **e-mail** attachment. Please do NOT imbed images in word, e-mail, or pdf, as this decreases resolution and you will be asked to re-submit.

The editor reserves the right to edit inappropriate material, errors in spelling, grammar, or punctuation, and to edit for clarity. In the event of significant changes the author will be given an opportunity to review the changes prior to publication.

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While submissions are welcome anytime, deadlines for consideration in upcoming issues are:

1st Quarter	February 15
2nd Quarter	May 15
3rd Quarter	August 15
4th Quarter	November 15

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PLEASE RECYCLE

PHOTO CREDITS

FRONT COVER

WILLIAM TUCKER

BACK COVER

WILLIAM TUCKER

FROM THE EDITOR

It's been brought to my attention that several photos were published with poor quality in the last issue of the Caver. I feel I owe a public apology to the photographer. Especially given my e-mail on cavetex about my background, it shouldn't have happened. I pulled the photo off the internet and didn't check the dpi because the e-mail regarding the photo mentioned it was hi res. Out of respect for the photographers, no more photos will be published that are not directly sent for publication.

A special thanks to Mallory Mayeaux for her help in motivating her grotto to submit articles. Thanks GHG guys!

UPDATED

EMERGENCIES

FOR CAVE ASSISTANCE, CALL THE CLOSEST COUNTY NUMBER:

BEXAR	210.865.2061
COLLIN	214.202.6611
HAYS	512.557.7965
MIDLAND	432.438.5076
SUTTON	325.450.3905
TRAVIS	512.663.2287

FOR LIFE THREATENING EMERGENCY: 911

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texas caver

THE BEST CAVERS' MAGAZINE IN TEXAS

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The Texas Speleological Association is a nonprofit, internal organization of the National Speleological Society and represents the greater caving community in Texas.

The TSA is comprised of both independent members and local grottos, and supports cave exploration and studies in and around the state of Texas.

The organization holds business meetings three times per year, organizes an annual spring convention for Texas cavers, and sponsors caving projects and events throughout the state.

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TCR OCTOBER 9-12

THE ANNUAL GET-TOGETHER FOR CAVERS AND CAVER LOVERS.

Ellie Watson

This is it! Texas Cavers Reunion at a new location in Spring Branch, on 3/4 miles of the Guadalupe River! The place is ours to enjoy for the weekend with refreshing water, views, food, friends, and fun.

This year's theme is"Super Villains." Registration gets you a wristband, the "Big Feed", beverages and a chance at door prizes. Bring your own plate, cup and feed tools to get the food from your plate to your food hole. Showers are available, some of us will stink before too long, so take advantage of the facilities please.

This is a family event, please limit nudity - away from kids, in front of me. All the fun will be there...Speleolympics, hot tub, swimming, awards, carousing, fun and friends.

We'll have live music so musical instruments are welcome, but not at the hot tub. Cameras also aren't allowed at the hot tub. That end of the park is a quiet zone and it will be enforced.

Sunday some intrepid individuals will be making breakfast to raise funds for the TCMA. TSA and TCMA have open meetings following.

Children and dogs are welcome! They must be well behaved; no biting, fighting, constant screaming or barking. Pooping on the ground isn't encouraged, but if they must, please clean up after them. Pets must be on leash.

cavetexas.org/events/TCR/index.html

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Kurt Menking

It's been another hot summer here in central Texas, but nothing like last year. Unfortunately not many rivers in this area have much water in them. Paradise Canyon has been dry for many months, and the Guadalupe is a trickle at best in most places above Canyon Lake. OK enough whining about the weather!

I put together a Caving Ethics slide show that I've presented to the Aggie, Bexar, and UT grottos. If anyone wants to present it in Dallas, Midland, Houston, or any other place I'll send you the presentation. Its been well received, and always sparks a good bit of conversation. The talk includes a fair amount of material from the NSS and a handful of additions from myself and others. I add a few slides to cover the issues presented by the audience after every talk.

I want to thank Ellie for organizing another great Honey Creek Cave trip in June. We held a work day with 40+ cavers help the property owner with different chores around the ranch. If you haven't heard, I'm stepping back from being the project manager for the Honey Creek Cave project. Ellie has agreed to take over, and the work day went a long way to win over the owner and make her feel comfortable with Ellie. I'll be there to help Ellie but hope to visit some other caves I haven't been to, and spend more time in Mexico.

If you're reading this you're probably a TSA member. If you're reading someone else's copy then please join TSA and get your own copy. If you know a caver that is not a TSA member, be a pest and ask them to join. We need the membership.

And while I'm begging, I might as well beg for Texas Caver articles. Jill's doing a great job of publishing award-winning issues, but the lack of content is always a major concern. If you want your TC to be on time with good content, then get off your tush, and write something. Not tomorrow, today!

And by the way "tush" required some real restraint.

GOVERNMENT CANYON KARST PROJECT

Marvin Miller

On Saturday morning Lasha Asanidze, Steve Gutting, Christopher Lafferty, George Veni and I headed up the Joe Johnston Rd. to survey and push leads in Big Dome Cave. It was George Veni's first visit to the cave. Being quite familiar with the local geology he was able to identify the limestone of the entrance room as the Dolomitic member of the Edwards, and later to tentatively identify the contact with the Basal Nodular at approximately the floor level below Big Dome.

Photo by Marvin Miller

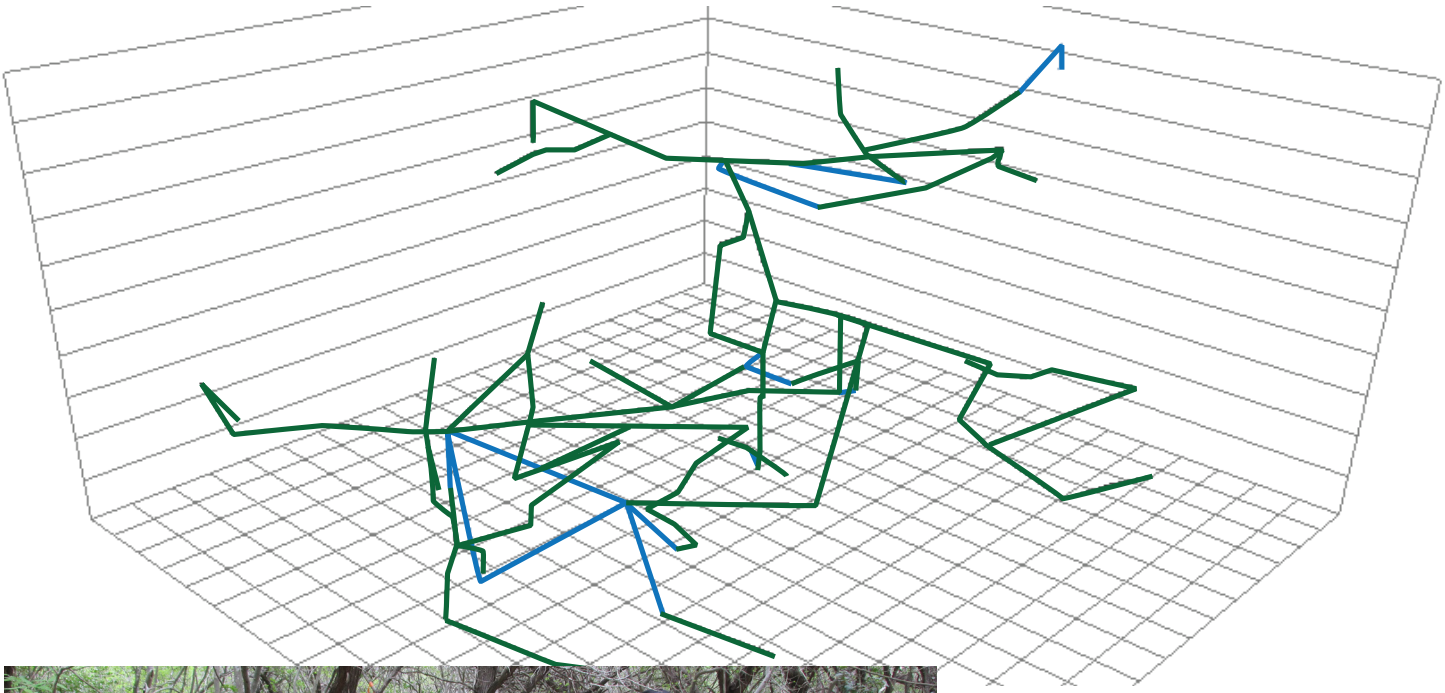
George, Lasha, and I surveyed a pit in the breakdown where the Ramblin' Roland Passage leaves the Breakaway Room. The Ramblin' Roland passage goes to Big Dome. Lasha, a NCKRI student intern from the country of Georgia was learning to survey. George set stations, Lasha read instruments and we surveyed 8.48 meters to the bottom, starting at station 15. The lead at the bottom did not tie into the Velvet Underground survey as I had anticipated. The lead has airflow but is breakdown choked. A small hole about a third of the way down the pit looked into the beginning of the Velvet Underground but it wasn't navigable so we didn't survey it. After entering the data into the Walls mapping program, I saw that the bottom of the pit was the new deepest point of the cave by 1.62 meters. The cave is now 17.92 meters deep.

Steve and Chris surveyed a crawl under breakdown that started at a tight entrance by station A3 and ended by tying into station B6 aedyed 10.26 meters and Steve reported that the right wall of the passage needs to be checked for leads.

When George, Lasha, and I finished our survey we went to work on a dig that Steve and Joe Schaertl had started on a few months before. The lead headed east from station DD4. A hole stepped down into a crawl-able space and then through another small hole into more space beyond. Both holes needed to be opened up. The three of us worked on chiseling off part of the rock obstructing the first hole until I managed to scrape through. Then I worked on the second hole, which was obstructed by fairly rotten rock. It wasn't long before I scraped through the second hole and found myself in a 3-meter wide crawl that went north at least 5 meters and south about 10 meters. Then, as I was looking south I saw a light ahead in the crawl. It was Chris, who had entered the passage without having to dig at all. As I was following Chris back out the easy way, I noticed some interesting space down through the breakdown at the beginning of the crawl that ought to be investigated on a future trip.

The cave is now 329.54 meters in surveyed length.

Sunday was a rainy day and only Chris Lafferty showed up



TOP: Big Dome 3D.
Rendering by Marvin Miller

BOTTOM: Lasha Asanidze, George Veni, Chris Lafferty, Steve Gutting after a day of surveying in Big Dome Cave.
Photo by Marvin Miller

once again to help. The trails were closed but the rain was light and intermittent so we set out to do some more ridgewalking in Area 5, just north of the Ranch House and east of Laurel Canyon.

The two of us couldn't cover much ground but we had a fruitful day nonetheless, in that we found an interesting cave. Situated at the base of a stair-stepping cliff on a steep and brushy canyon side at an elevation of 1180 feet was a small, dark triangular hole.

I called out to Chris, who was on the slope above the cliff, and he announced that he was in a dry stream bed that was heading straight for my location. He appeared on the cliff above and it is obvious that a stream of water will fall to the base of the cliff and enter the cave during storms. The floor from the entrance to the near wall – approximately 2 meters inside – was clean washed. A dirt-floored crawl led off to the right. Directly ahead, by the wall, it looked like there might be a drop.

I moved ahead on hands and knees and found myself looking down a nice pit. The pit entrance was about .7 meters by 1.5 meters but it immediately belled out to approximately 3 meters in diameter.

About 5 meters down was a large sloping ledge but the main part of the pit continued down at least another 5 meters and it looked like there was another small ledge close to the bottom. Beyond that we couldn't see.

We were initially going to name the cave Rainy Day Cave but that name is already taken in the TSS database, so after thinking about it I decided the cave needed a more auspicious name.

I chose the name Solitude Pit. Sitting alone in the cave twilight at the edge of a silent, but inviting, pit gave me a feeling something like that.

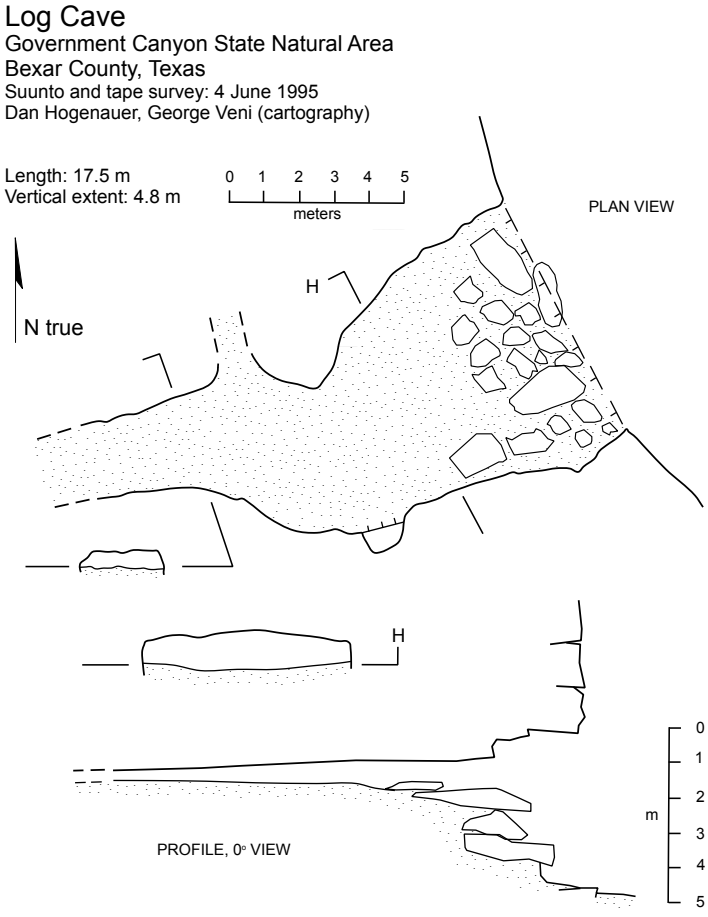
We also recorded one additional karst feature that was already flagged but had no aluminum tag and was outside of our previously covered area.

THE FOLLOWING TWO SMALL CAVE MAPS WERE RECENTLY COMPLETED FOR THE GOVERNMENT CANYON KARST PROJECT.

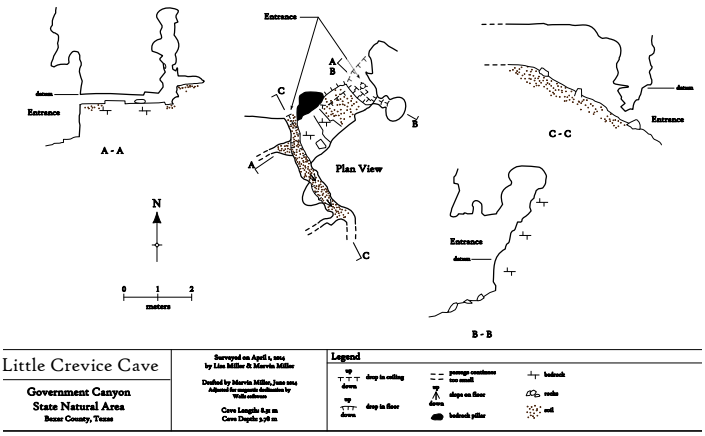
Log Cave

The entrance to Log Cave is 1.5 m up in a cliff-side. Its entrance is 2.8 m high by 7 m wide, but the breakdown floor rises within 2 m to within 0.4 m of the ceiling. It extends about 11 m to the southwest before becoming too low to follow. A dry, dusty silt covers most of the cave floor.

The cave was discovered and explored during a Government Canyon Karst Project trip on 4 September 1994 by Keith Heuss, Mark Sanders, and David Williams. They named it for a small log found inside. It was rediscovered the following day by Brooke Bechtel, David Locklear, and Carol McGee, labeled as Karst Feature 15-3 and named 2 Skunk Cave. Benjamin, Christopher and Keith Heuss surveyed it as 2 Skunk Cave on 6 November 1994, not recognizing that it was Log Cave. Aaron and Rick Corbell, Dan Hogenauer, and George Veni resurveyed the cave as Log Cave on 4 June 1995, and clarified the previous confusion about the cave's identity.



Little Crevice Cave



The main part of Little Crevice Cave is entered by a bedding plane squeeze in a cliff face that opens into 3 m tall crevice running at right angles to the squeeze. To the left the crevice floor slopes up steeply for about 3 m to where becomes impassably narrow. To the right, toward the cliff face, the crevice ends after about a meter but a hole at floor level provides an entrance to the cave for small animals.

Inside the drip-line of the overhang that shelters the main opening to the cave is a hole approximately 1 m tall by .4 m wide that ascends up into the cliff and darkness. This passage can be free-climbed to where it ends in a little dome almost 5 m above the ground.

This cave was first reported by Peter Sprouse several years ago but was only just surveyed on April 1, 2014 by Lisa Miller and Marvin Miller.

CAVES OF GOVERNMENT CANYON BOOK RELEASE COMING SOON!

All of the known caves in Government Canyon State Natural Area will be featured in a publication being prepared by the Texas Speleological Survey. The latest in the TSS "*Caves Of...*" series will contain maps, photographs, descriptions, history, geology, and biological records. Publication is anticipated early in 2015.

ON THE SUBJECT OF TRIP REPORTS AND ARTICLES

Mimi Jasek

The problem of content for The Texas Caver is not a new occurrence by any means, nor will it ever be solved. We are human, prone to procrastination, and our lives are incredibly fast and full. Today though, we have technology on our side that simply was not present back when the following was submitted and printed. After repeating this wonderful passage from a good friend, I will address how the wonders of our modern world just might help some of you write something and submit it for publication.

TRIP REPORTS MADE EASY

Chuck Stuehm

How many times have you said "This is a good cave trip, I'll have to write it up and send it to the "Caver"? But as the days go by and the weeks get longer you find that it's harder and harder to start that trip report. Then it's been so long since the trip that it's old news and who wants to read old trip reports?

If you do sit down to write it up after a week or so you don't think about some of the off-beat things that happened or they don't seem important enough to write about so you send in some report that is dry and uninteresting.

Well, what can be done to make sure that you do send in good trip reports? Keep a small notepad about the size of a stenographers notepad on your dash board or in your glove compartment and while you are driving you can have someone in your car start writing or making notes of the things that are happening. Things that are funny, strange, dumb, or smart. Things that people say or situations that may be of interest to others. Important aspects of routes to a cave (travel log) or details of certain land-owners likes and dislikes, etc.

There are many things that happen on most cave trips that would be good reading to others. Jot it down, make a note, but most of all write it up! Do it while it is happening! ! ! Remember the old proverb that says "A trip report is not a trip report unless it is reported".

The TEXAS CAVER
VOLUME XVIII, NUMBER 2, Page 57
(Submitted as it was printed in February 1973)

As you can see, the problem remains the same after all these years, and back then our magazine came out 12 times a year! Talk about pressure on the editor, printer, and mailing staff - if there was any staff!

Now, to that technology I referred to above. I would venture to say that at least one or more of you in a vehicle on any given trip has a cell phone or tablet or even laptop, has the ability to take pictures with said phone, and has an e-mail account that could be used from said phone or tablet or laptop. If you have an app that lets you dictate to that device, you are even more ahead of the game! You start out on the trip, and every little thing that happens can be captured almost as it happens, in word and pictures. Even if you have to type it in, most of you can type in some fashion on your phone or other device with only thumbs at the speed of lightning - I've seen it!! If several of you make your own notes and take pictures, the more the better. Then when the trip is over, especially if you are gathered around a campsite, you could clean your trip up to that point, designate one person as the trip information gatherer, and when home, send that person all your data. They can then put it all together and send it in to the editor. It is really not rocket science - just takes a bit of organization and hitting a few buttons on your smart devices. Our current editor should have the tools to fix pictures that need some help - or find someone who does - and if necessary, combine all the different stories into one fantastic trip report. The designated information gatherer really should do this, though, for any editor or proof reader has enough to do getting a clean issue out on time without having to rewrite all the articles!! (Been there, done that, folks, too many times!!) The flavor and character of each individual report, as from the perspective of the participants, is what makes The TEXAS CAVER such a pleasure to read because of the diversity of writing styles.

Now, even with technology, I know all this sounds time consuming. Many of you want to just enjoy the trips, sleep on them if you can, and talk away with your friends. I know, though, from personal experience, that this can be done

If you are willing to give it a try, you can even come home with a route map of where you have been to be printed out, and most vehicles have the ability to let you charge your devices as you go along. There are also various small charging devices and apps that let you stay charged up and in good GPS position, if it is available.

If you are not trying to keep your caving exploits secret, as is happening more and more these days, why not give these ideas a try? You just might be surprised at what you can accomplish, and then the prize at the end - being immortalized for all time in the printed word that is our magazine, The TEXAS CAVER.

With great respect to all those who go underground, we all would really like to hear from you;-) Remember that not all of us can go all the places you might go, and even if it is enjoyed vicariously, there is nothing like a good caving article or trip report to make our hearts beat faster and bring forth all kinds of emotions. Pictures then make it come alive.

So, go out there, go caving, then let the rest of us enjoy what you discovered. It will be worth it!

SMART PHONE CAVE PHOTOGRAPHY

James Jasek

Photo by James Jasek

THERE ARE MANY REASONS TO GO CAVING, SUCH AS ADVENTURE, EXPLORATION, MAPPING, AND PHOTOGRAPHY, TO NAME JUST A FEW. PHOTOGRAPHY IS ONE OF THE MAIN REASONS FOR ME, AND OVER THE YEARS I HAVE SEEN PHOTOGRAPHY ADVANCE IN LEAPS AND BOUNDS, ESPECIALLY IN DIGITAL. NOW WITH THE DEVELOPMENT AND OWNERSHIP OF THE SMART PHONES, PHOTOGRAPHY IS IN THE HANDS OF EVERYONE.

Every day there are millions, if not billions, of images shot with the cell phone, as the phone is with us almost everywhere we go. The quality of the image does not seem to be important, most are posted on the Internet and forgotten, but this does not mean the cell phone has to produce poor quality images. Since most of us carry a cell phone, there is no reason not to take the camera in the cave and record your trip; for posting on-line, for publishing in The Texas Caver, NSS News, and grotto newsletters, and to illustrate your trip reports.

Photography before digital was a combination of film and darkroom. Now it is a combination of digital and computer. The computer is now the darkroom. To get the most out of a cell phone image, it is helpful to use a computer and simple imaging software to adjust the image. This means color balance, cropping, contrast control, and some sharpening.

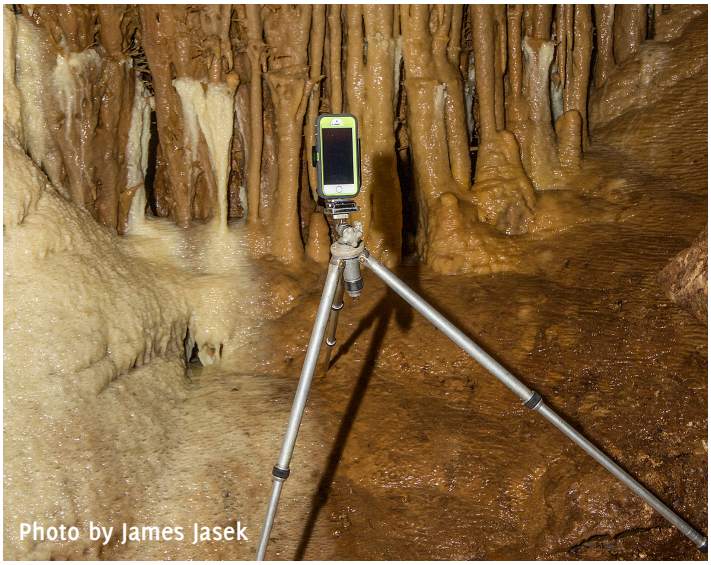
Using the cell phone for cave photography, on the way to and from the cave, is easy. Just use the phone for picture taking, and by following a few simple steps, you can greatly improve the results. Photography is all about light, and the best time to shoot pictures is two hours after sunrise and two hours before sunset. Since it is not always possible to shoot at the best times, such as shooting in the middle of the day, just do the best you can in any situation. Position the camera for the least shadow and try to position the subject in bright sun. For every image, keep a steady hand, and, if necessary, steady the cell phone against a tree, large rock, or some solid object. This improves sharpness. Always avoid zooming the lens as this will destroy sharpness. The image can be cropped after the image is stored in the phone, so zooming is not necessary.

Be sure the lens on the cell phone is clean, and there are no fingerprints or smudges on the lens.

Taking the camera underground introduces other preparations to protect the smart phone. Since most cell phones are sensitive to moisture and shock, a good protective case is a must. A totally waterproof case can

Brown and white formations. Photo taken with a Smart phone.

be a problem if the lens is covered; this cover degrades the sharpness of the image. There are many cases on the market, and the good ones are rather expensive. I use the Otter Case for my phone, and while it is not waterproof, it is water resistant and shockproof if I drop it. Find one you like, and use it all the time for your phone. It would also be a good idea to carry your phone in a small padded case to keep the mud and moisture off the monitor window, and for extra protection while crawling. Your pocket is



a very bad place to carry the phone, as clothing gets wet and will transfer too much moisture to the phone.

A second item is a tripod mount for the phone. It is an inconvenience to use the phone on a tripod, but it will increase the sharpness of the image. In low light the phone will use the slowest shutter speed, and a handheld photo will not be sharp. Look on the Internet for tripod mounts, and pick out the ones that meet your needs and price range.

The protective case, like the Otter Case, adds extra thickness to the phone, and most tripod mounts are designed to use without a case. You will need to find a tripod mount that is adjustable for the added thickness. Google is a good site to find tripod mounts, and they are not expensive.

Carrying a tripod underground is a pain for all cave photographers, but it is totally necessary for sharp cave photos. Try to find one that collapses down as short as possible to carry in a cave pack. Since the cell phone is very lightweight, any lightweight tripod will work perfectly.

Now we come to lighting. The flash built into the phone produces the worst type of lighting for photography, as it is a very flat, shadowless light. Many cavers have gone to using the LED cave light on the helmet, but this light is often very harsh, producing burned out spots in the image that are very distracting in the final photo.

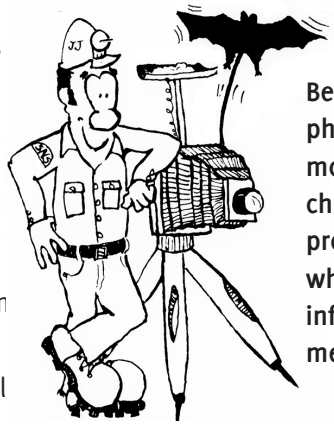
The best light is the LED light bank used for video. They are inexpensive. I have two I carry for cave photography. I use lights, one at the camera and the second one off to one side. Here is where the tripod con into play. With the cell phone mounted on a tripod, the LED video light will light up the cave – resulting in a real good photograph you will be proud to show your friends.

Photo by James Jasek

This image of a cave formation was taken with the cell phone mounted on a tripod. One video light was at the camera position, with a second video light on the left side to create the shadows. Photo by James Jasek.

It is possible to hold the video light in one hand, the cell phone in the other, and take a picture without using the tripod, as long as you are fairly close to the subject. Be sure the flash built into the phone is turned off.

With careful use, the cell phone is capable of very good images, especially for those who are not interested in carrying a larger camera.



Because of the different models of phones, protective cases, tripod mounts, tripods, and video lights, I chose not to recommend any particular product. Your needs will dictate what you should use. If any further information is needed, you may contact me at caverjam@hot.rr.com.

CRAVING VIRGIN CAVE?

Bill Steele

THERE'S A PLETHORA OF VIRGIN PASSAGE WAITING TO BE EXPLORED AND SURVEYED IN TEXAS' LONGEST CAVE - HONEY CREEK. AND EVERY METER SURVEYED IS A NEW RECORD FOR THE LONGEST CAVE IN TEXAS!

There is lots of it, just waiting for energetic, gung-ho cave explorers. Not only that, but to get there, you get to travel long distances through some of the best cave passages in Texas.

I checked with Dr. George Veni, a long-time Texas caver who is the director of the National Cave and Karst Research Institute in Carlsbad, NM, and the keeper of the Honey Creek Cave lead list. George has maintained the Honey Creek list for over 30 years. Here's what he had to say about pushing leads in Honey Creek Cave:

"My main thought about inspiring cavers to push Honey Creek, is that while many of Honey Creek Cave's 179 leads probably won't amount to much; namely, dome leads, most leads, though small, will still be longer than the typical 50 meter long Texas cave. While surveying short caves is certainly useful, cavers will rack up more distance surveying in Honey Creek. If on average, each of the 179 leads produced only 50 meters of surveyed passage, this would substantially move the cave up on the US longest caves list."

It's time to see what the total length of Texas' longest cave really is, and that can only be done by exploring and surveying all passages.

Here's your invitation to go for it. To schedule survey trips, contact Kurt Menking of Bexar Grotto.

A complete list of Honey Creek Cave leads and locations are available on page 31.

HONEY CREEK CAVE FACTS

Current leads: 179
Longest cave in Texas!
33,334.9 m long (33.3 km /20.7 miles)

NATIONAL: 29th longest cave
Survey totals needed for next ranks:
155 m Blue Spring Cave, IN
231 m Chestnut Ridge Cave, VA
622 m Lost River Cave, IN

INTERNATIONAL: 120th longest cave
Survey totals needed for next ranks:
65 m Ellis Basin System, New Zealand
155 m Blue Spring Cave, IN
165 m Gamslocher-Kolowratsystem, Austria

LITHIC RIDGE CAVE

Chris Vreeland

I HADN'T BEEN DOWN TO GOVERNMENT CANYON IN WAY TOO LONG.

Photo by Chris Vreeland

I was there for the first trip when the TSA first got the newly-acquired property opened up for ridge-walking, exploration, and cave inventory in an M.O.A. with Texas Parks and Wildlife, and it was a huge, thriving success. I recall sleeping in what is now a park office building, but at the time was an abandoned old ranch house, my sleeping bag rolled out on the floor. There must have been upwards of 20 or 30 participants those first few trips.

I made the next several trips in a row, usually camping on Saturday night, but occasionally driving down from Austin to San Antonio and back on Saturday. I recall there being a massive thunderstorm very late at night on the 2nd trip, and have no idea how my cheap 2-man Coleman tent survived. The next morning, everything was wet. While hiking up one of the road-cuts to reach our ridge-walking destination, I spotted water flowing into a pile of rocks, but not out the other side. I flagged it, and on the next trip, dug open my first cave find of my entire career – a gruelingly tight, but enticing, mostly-vertical groad hole we named Sure Sink.

As the years wore on, my participation slowly dwindled. Some highlights of my time there included the original survey of Lost Pothole Cave, and the discovery of the blowing lead at the bottom that obsessed many of us for years. The trip where Rebecca O'Daniel squeezed through after an hour's worth of rock shaving to report a going pit past the squeeze, then couldn't get back out for oh, 15 minutes... was a classic and will always be forever one of my most cherished memories of a wonderful woman whom I miss dearly.

Unfortunately, I wasn't much of a cave photographer in those days, so the few snapshots I got are hardly worth looking at—but I decided to try to rectify this last fall. I talked to Marvin Miller about coming down to photograph some of the caves using a tripod, multiple flashes and some slaves (one of whom is my son Jacob Vreeland, who can push a "test" button on a Vivitar 285 like nobody's business), to do some real photo cave-documenting. On October 5th, I started at Lithic Ridge Cave. We had intended to get some photos of Dancing Rattler Cave as well, but got to the property late due to a massive road closure on Loop 1604 that left us literally sitting still in the car for almost an hour. I also got lost because I didn't know the road to the old park headquarters was now a side-road. It had been the only road into the park on my previous trips. I pulled up to the fancy new admission booth and told the attendant I was one of the cave volunteers and she had no idea what I was talking about. Fortunately, Marvin was very patiently waiting for me, and I managed to get him on his cell phone and he directed me to the meeting point. Other than one other San Antonio caver, we were the only participants to show up that weekend. Despite having held him up for an hour, Marvin was glad to

Photo by Chris Vreeland

see us. I don't know if participation has dwindled due to burnout, or if most of the easily-found caves have been found and surveyed, but it's such a nice walk in the woods it's a shame more cavers within reasonable driving distance don't come out, especially with camping available.

I don't think we actually got underway on our hike to the cave until a little after 11 and it was abnormally warm for October. By the time we reached Lithic Ridge Cave, we were sweating pretty heavily and I realized we hadn't brought enough fluids, so I scrapped my plan to hike down and up through the brush to the next ridge for fear the vultures would notice us dying of dehydration.

Lithic Ridge Cave isn't huge, and it's mainly horizontal, so it was an easy cave for Jacob, who is still getting the basics of rope work. Past the entrance crawl, and a hands-and-knees tube that's about 20 feet long, there is a low, wide room about 4 feet high, with some nice formations around the fringes. Beyond that, the floor drops off into a narrow walkway which leads to the back of the cave, with even higher ceilings. We took a series of shots in the first low room, then some looking down the walking passage.

I elected to shoot the back of the cave another time, when bats weren't present. Our presence had chased them all to the back of the cave, and they were a bit aflutter as it was. Also, by this time, the gnats were getting to us, and they were worse at the back of the cave. We took some more shots around the exit, leaving the cave about halfway photographed.

I had hoped to return in December when fewer bats would be present, but the weather was horrible with torrential rains, so it has to wait for another day. I hope to go back; start earlier and finish Lithic Ridge, then make my way across the next valley to photograph the Dancing Rattler system. Maybe this winter...

LOCATED IN THE PANHANDLE, THE LUBBOCK AREA GROTTO FINDS ITSELF SOMEWHAT ISOLATED, GEOGRAPHICALLY, FROM THE REST OF TEXAS CAVING. WE SEEM TO HAVE MORE IN COMMON WITH NEW MEXICO. AT LEAST THE CAVES, ESPECIALLY THOSE OF THE GUADALUPE MOUNTAINS, ARE CLOSER. SO, MOST OFTEN, WE CAVE THERE. AS A RESULT, OTHER TEXANS DON'T ALWAYS GET TO HEAR OF OUR ADVENTURES. I DECIDED THAT IT WAS TIME TO WRITE AN ARTICLE FOR THE TEXAS CAVER DESCRIBING ONE OF THE PROJECTS THAT LAG MEMBERS ARE WORKING ON.

Photo by William Tucker

C-23

William Tucker

In the summer of 2012, while looking for tasks for the High Guads Restoration Project, US Forest Service Cave Specialist, Jason Walz, found mention of a cave in the files that he had not otherwise known. He decided to assign the task of locating and documenting this lost cave to the High Guads Restoration Project (HGRP). HGRP is a group of volunteer cavers who regularly perform cave related tasks for the Guadalupe District of the Lincoln National Forest. In this case, we were given: a crude sketch, with an approximate scale; and several dots on maps, which did not agree, as possible locations.

In July 2012, Jennifer Foote, Mark Bulman, Tammy Tucker and I (William Tucker) set out to find the cave. We drove as far as we could, then hiked and climbed up and down the cliffs and along the dense arroyos checking out each location from the sparse clues that we had been given. Late in the day, after we were all showing the scrapes, punctures and scratches of our journey, we found the entrance. Had I known it was going to be at the last place we looked, we might have started there. We had elected to leave our ropes and vertical gear at the car on the thought that we could go back and get them if they were needed. That was a good decision as I doubt that we would have made it that far carrying that extra weight and bulk; but, now, we wanted that gear and did not have it. As it was late in the day, all we could do was to record the location and take a quick look to assess what gear we might need in the future. It appeared to be a very deep crevice-like cave with a small entrance and no

Photo by William Tucker

obvious anchor location for a rope.

Between July and September of 2012, I studied the topographical maps to find a better route to the cave. I found a road, a suitable camping spot and a hiking route which cut hours off of the travel time. I also researched as much as I could to find out what was known about the cave from other sources. From my research, it appears that the cave was known as early as 1965 where it is simply described as a deep crevice. I was also able to contact a couple of people who had entered the cave and who drew the rough, mostly profile, sketch of it around 1993. They also said that it was just a deep crevice with little decoration and that there was nothing special about it.

In September 2012, Mark Bulman (from Carlsbad), Derek Smith, Tammy Tucker and I (all from Lubbock) started the survey at the entrance. We were expected to complete it in one day based on what was known at the time. We used cams placed in cracks in a cliff above the entrance to anchor a 160 foot rope. It turned out to be way too short. A 250 foot rope was used the next day and it was also too short; but, we were able to make do with a hand-line from Derek's pack tied on to the end. We successfully resurveyed all that was previously known of the cave from the crude sketch. We made note of a couple of "wings" where the fissure seemed to continue. We wanted to add these to the survey; but, they were going to be hard to access. It was going to require some climbing and creativity to do it safely.

In July 2013 we went back, this time with a 350 foot rope. The goal was to use the rope to belay a horizontal chimney through the high part of the fissure to access one of the wings. The thought was that a fall would result in a large Tarzan swing that was likely survivable and might even be fun. This technique worked and we found ourselves on an obviously virgin shelf. There was a thin calcite crust on the loose sediment floor with large boxwork fins sticking out of the walls at various places. We surveyed along this shelf for approximately 200 feet and then found a pit at the back. The laser distance meter indicated that the pit was 90 feet deep. Since our rope was snaking from the entrance drop,

Photo by William Tucker

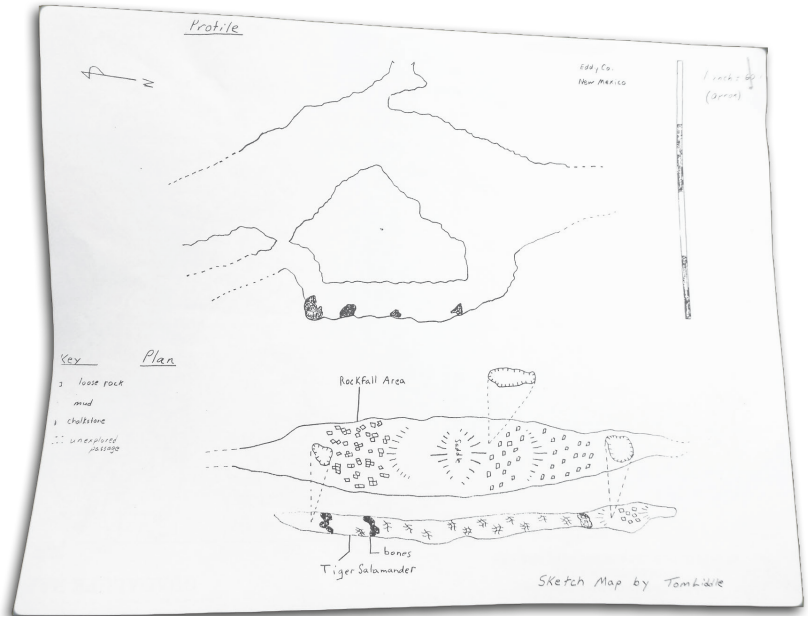
Photo by William Tucker

Photo by William Tucker

horizontally through the fissure, then along the shelf, and now we were asking it to drop another 90 feet, it was too short again. We made it work by tying a 150 foot rope on to the end in order to access this new pit.

What we found when we got off rope at the bottom was a surprise to everyone. It was large, obviously virgin, solution passage. Except for the linear path, the crevice-like features all but disappeared. The cave became wider, more highly decorated with a more rounded intersection between the walls and the ceiling. It was decorated with large rim stone dams, calcite rafts, bell canopies, and large flowstone mounds with gours. Popcorn coated the walls and the floor was covered with a calcite crust over fine sediments. Rafts were visible in the pools. There were several leads headed off in various directions, but one seemed grander than the rest, so we started surveying it. It was easy walking passage, 20-40 feet wide with high ceilings. The passage led in a straight line almost due south so seemed to be a continuation of the fissure

Photo by William Tucker



though it looked more like solution cave. It ended after several hundred feet becoming too tight to continue; but, before it did so, an even larger intersecting passage was found.

This new passage was distinctly solutional. It was much wider than the fissure with large shelves formed by various dissolution periods. Winding along the bottom was a deeper, narrower channel that looked something like a stream bed.

The passage was decorated with aragonite bushes, popcorn, manganese crusts, large columns, draperies, stalagmites and stalactites including large masses of soda straws. Side chambers showed signs of paleo pools with mammillaries, thick shelfstone and a dark bathtub ring, all indicating long standing water. They were dry now.

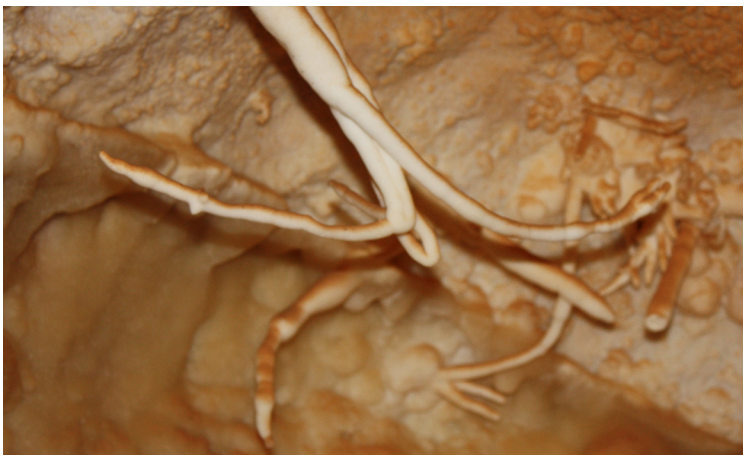
During this time, we also began to make note of the depth and location of the cave in relation to the surface features. The cave is very deep and does not come close to making any other surface contact. The cave is over 200 feet below the level of the creek, which is the lowest nearby surface point; and, many hundreds of feet of overburden are above the main part of the cave as it works its way back under the hill. There are intersecting fissures which we are exploring which could change that; but, the cave joins those fissures many hundreds of feet below the surface.

In November of 2013, Jennifer Foote joined us for her first trip into the cave. She had spent the summer working at Jewel Cave, had been reading our trip reports and was anxious to see this new discovery for herself.

On this trip with Jennifer, a new passage was found and the cave changed again. It got smaller, straighter and much more highly decorated with large numbers of antler helictites, beaded helictites, aragonite bushes, conulites and many strange and wonderful formations. This passage went in a very straight line, almost due north, for 1000 feet and abruptly ended.

In March of 2014, we headed off in another direction down a side passage, which turned out to be very interesting. We started finding shields, lots of them, and some were big. Over eight shields have been inventoried so far.

We also found some very long soda straws. Forced to stop by a too fragile section of the soda straw



columns on a loose breakdown floor, we hope to find another way in. More cave is visible beyond; but we don't want to risk damaging anything in the meantime.

Jason Walz joined us for his first chance to see the cave in May 2014. On that trip, a major new discovery was made. We first attempted to use a slingshot to snag a chockstone at one of the intersecting fissures. After that effort failed, we belayed a climb-up onto a ledge.

There we found a shallow pool with a passage beyond. After surveying along that passage for a few hundred feet, it opened into the largest room that we have found, so far. The room has several large leads heading off in diverse directions. The room was too large to capture in a single day of survey; so it remains only partially complete.

Apart from the massive size of this room, one of the more notable features is several large fields of calcite raft cones. The floor in these areas is covered with a thick layer of rafts that appear to be several inches deep, like snow, with many cones of rafts looking like small volcanoes. Indications are that this area may have been wet recently; but, it was dry at the time.

As of this writing, this is where the survey stands: we have documented well over a half mile (more than 3100 feet) of new cave. The deepest point is 290 feet below the entrance. The furthest station is more than 2100 feet from the entrance. We have passed numerous leads and the cave is still going strong. We plan to continue to survey and to document this cave at every opportunity. It is already one of the more significant caves in the Guads - and who knows where she will stand when we are done.

The following people have contributed many hours of effort to find, survey, and document this cave: Mark Bulman, Derek Smith, Jennifer Foote, Jason Walz, Tammy Tucker and William Tucker. Daniel Austin has being doing the cartography though having never visited the cave.

Photo by Evan Strickland

GHG'S ANNUAL TAG-ATHON

Evan Strickland

In the early morning of May 23rd, seven adventurers, Ray Hertel, Scott Cogburn, Chris Lafferty, Holly Weinstock, Wes Rosenstein, Alisa Vance, and I, began loading our camping and caving gear into two vehicles. During this time, we took the sight of a bat flying overhead as an auspicious sign for a great trip to come. By 6:30 am, the group departed for Alabama for the second annual Greater Houston Grotto TAG trip. We pushed past breakfast, and eventually stopped for brunch at a local Louisiana eatery where we savored some boudin and cracklin. From there, a full day of mostly uneventful driving brought us to camp around 8:00 pm. As the others pitched their tents, I set up my hammock, draped with mosquito netting and a rain-tarp. Then we all laid down and dreamt of stalactites and flowstone. These dreams, however, were interrupted by a cacophony of thousands of birds sounding throughout the forest at 5:00 am sharp.

This first morning, we prepared our gear, and went to the Liberty Diner in Scottsborough for breakfast. We placed our orders, and as we chatted among ourselves, a fellow sat at the table next to us. After some minutes of observing our group, he inquired as to whether we

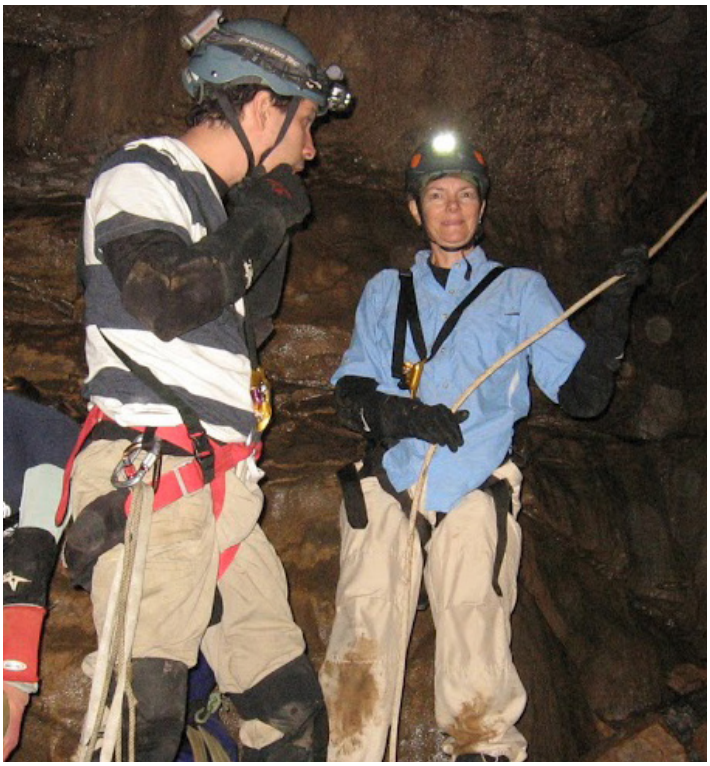
Photo by Evan Strickland

Photo by Evan Strickland

were Texas cavers, because he had noticed the Texas bat-sticker on Wes's vehicle. We acknowledged that we indeed were, and learned that this fellow was none other than Aaron Polsky, the son of Milton Polsky, both of whom are very experienced and knowledgeable cavers. Aaron's father was one of the contacts Wes had been speaking with in order to gain information on caves in the area. After listening to our plans of which pits we intended to visit, Aaron suggested some amendments to our trip. Of them, he recommended that we start our trip by dropping into Neversink. His descriptions of this particular pit won us over, and we unanimously agreed to meet him there after breakfast. After a short drive, we made it to the parking location for Neversink, where we found Aaron's vehicle already there. We proceeded along a short hike, when Aaron appeared from up ahead to guide us the rest of the way, as some of the trail had been obscured by fallen trees. As we came upon Neversink, we beheld one of the most beautiful pits I have ever seen. Water rained down from its rim, and light weaved through the trees beaming down into its depths, producing an unreal display of the interplay between nature and the elements.

Before our arrival, Aaron had already rigged his rope down to the bottom, and rappelled and ascended two or three times; a routine activity for Aaron, who goes pit-bouncing weekly. While Chris, Aaron, and Wes prepared the second rope, the rest of us skirted the rim and peered down into the depths of Neversink, a 160 foot, uninterrupted drop. To descend this pit would be a significant step up for Ray, Scott, Holly, and I, as Punkin, a west Texas cave with a 50 foot entrance drop, was the only other cave we had dropped. With the second rope rigged, we geared up and, after checking one another, each member of the group made their descent. Everyone executed a great and safe rappel, and we were soon all on the bottom. There is no cave passage inside Neversink; instead we discovered a number of species of amphibians and arthropods, among them a giant frog, larger than my hand, and some crayfish in a small pool. After a group photo and a bit of photography of the biota, we ascended the pit. Everyone did an outstanding job at our first TAG pit, and we were ready for our second.

We took a detour to Aaron's house, where we ate lunch, and had the pleasure of meeting his father. By the afternoon, we were on our way to Stephen's Gap. After parking and gathering our gear, we proceeded on our second hike for the day along a forested trail. This trail led us by Pipeside Pit, which we had originally planned on dropping for our first pit of the trip. Having done Neversink instead, this pit now appeared as only a small crack in the ground. Further into the forest, up along the valley, the sound of falling water signaled that we were close to Stephen's Gap. One final steep hike brought us to its foot, and, as it was already becoming dusk, no time was wasted in searching for rigging points. Stephen's Gap has an open pit that drops roughly 140 feet, as well as a large walk-in entrance to the side which intersects the pit about two-thirds the way down. While the usual crew began rigging the rope, the remainder of us explored the walk-in portion. Breakdown led to a large room, where we could gaze up through the open pit at the fading light. In attempting to rig the rope, we discovered that a rock



TOP: Evan ready to descend. BOTTOM: Alisa, Wes, and Holly. RIGHT: Wes in the War Eagle.

once used as a tie-off was missing, and so we would be unable to drop to the very bottom. Instead, the roped was rigged so that we could descend to the ledge below, and walk-out the other entrance. With the rope secured and lowered, Wes, Chris, Ray, and I made the drop. For myself, I found working my way over and between the rocks to be a challenge. But having finally lowered far enough down to where I was freely suspended, I steadily completed my descent to the ledge. Ray later commented that during his descent, poison ivy had brushed his face; another nuisance that one easily overlooks when concerned about retaining control over one's rappel. With our visit to Stephen's Gap now complete, ending a good day of pit-dropping, we went to the fabulous Buenavista, where we had dinner with Aaron, and enjoyed delicious food and good company. All were in good spirits, and upon returning to camp, we laid down for some well-earned rest.

The next day was the longest and, in my opinion, the most rewarding. Early in the morning, we packed our gear and traveled over an hour to Georgia, where we met Michael Coulter for breakfast. Michael was another of Wes' contacts, and would lead us into Cemetery Pit. Earlier in his caving career, he was a Texas caver, and on our ride to the cave, he shared with me some of his past experiences. By the time we parked our vehicles, the day was considerably hot and humid. Fortunately, after a warm hike, we found relief in the cool air at the entrance of the cave, which was situated in the base of a pronounced sink-hole. Sheltered there from the heat, we proceeded to put on our gear, and after Michael had rigged the rope, we made our descent one by one. Still wearing our gear, we continued through some predominately walking passage, when we came to a second drop, which we later estimated to be some forty feet. It was exciting for us to conquer our first in-cave rappel, a feat which is doubly notable because this drop is nearly the same distance as Punkin cave, which had challenged half the members of our group just a few months before. With everyone having rappelled down this second drop, we continued another half hour or so into the cave, walking among large passages with giant, slanted ceilings, and a number of domes.

We stopped to rest at our intended destination: a final dome which our group had planned on rigging a rope down into. However, Chris and Wes made the call that they would be unable to do so safely, and so we decided to explore elsewhere. Michael took us on a detour to the Art Room, where there were dozens of impressive clay sculptures that have been made by cavers over the years. It is similar in many ways to the "Aggey Art Gallery" of Airman's cave in Austin, Texas, but with a significant reduction in the number of phalluses appended to the artwork. A particular face sculpture was so well done, that

when Ray posted his photograph of it online, it was tagged by Facebook's face recognition software! After everyone had completed appreciating the artwork, we switched our attention to an adjacent passage down a steep, muddy slope. Chris rigged a rope for us to use as a safety, and we proceeded to clamber down, bringing us to the bottom of a dome, which I believe was the one we had been looking down earlier. We came to the end of the walking passage, and the only lead was a very steep, muddy slope. Steps had been pressed into the mud up the slope, so it proved not to be entirely unclimbable. Wes carefully made his way up to the top and a few of us proceeded to follow him, though warily. Wes was both surprised that we dared to follow and pleased that we wished to explore further. After reaching the top we went along a final route that brought us up to another magnificent dome. This dome was even deeper than the one we had planned on dropping earlier; an exciting discovery for us. Having finished exploring, we reunited with the rest of the group and made our trek out of the cave. It was night by the time we exited, and though I was surrounded by plants, darkness left me with the lingering feeling as if I was still in a large cave passage. Recollecting our adventure that day, we calculated that our total time entering, exploring, and exiting the cave added up to about ten hours. It was indeed a very long and equally rewarding day of caving.

We decided to take it easy and only cave for a few hours on our final day, leaving time to celebrate back at camp that night. In the morning, we ate at the Liberty Diner again and recorded our entries into their cave journal.

After meeting back up with Aaron, we went on a short hike up to the entrance of War Eagle. The entrance is somewhat small, but the drop proved very scenic. The ledge over which you rappel is of flowstone, the walls of the pit are decorated by patches of flowstone, and a single, large flowstone pillar reaches nearly to the bottom. At the bottom, we removed our vertical gear, then faced the first of the technical routes we would traverse in this cave. Here, a rope was required for us to skirt down and around a ledge without falling into the stream. After that, we leisurely proceeded down large walking passages, while diverting here and there to check out areas rich in formations. Aaron was very pleased to be giving us a tour of War Eagle, it is one of his favorite and most often visited caves. As we followed the stream that flowed throughout, we were amazed by how enormous the passages were. Even the highest-powered lights at our disposal had difficultly shining down the entirety of the cavern. Throughout our journey, there were numerous instances where Aaron's assistance proved invaluable to keep us from slipping off a ledge, or sliding too fast down a muddy-slope and plunging into water. After wading through some waist-deep pools, we made it to one last spectacular formation room, decorated with thousands of soda straws. We were very grateful for this opportunity to tour this cave that Aaron loved so much, and it made for a very rewarding final day.

Once we exited War Eagle, Aaron departed from us to celebrate his dad's birthday, and we went to enjoy another meal at the wonderful Buenavista. Returning to camp, we prepared a fire, and sitting around it, commenced drinking some rounds of bourbon, while filling the night with jokes and stories. Rising the next morning at 5:00 am for an early start, we had the pleasure of experiencing the eruption of bird calls one last time before returning to Houston.

COLORADO BEND: A YEAR IN REVIEW

THE COLORADO BEND STATE PARK KARST PROJECT OBJECTIVE IS TO ASSIST WITH THE INVENTORY, DISCOVERY, AND PROTECTION OF THE KARST RESOURCES OF COLORADO BEND STATE PARK.

Kris Peña and Will Quast

Photo by Will Quast

Photo by Will Quast

The Colorado Bend State Park Karst Project objective is to assist with the inventory, discovery, and protection of the karst resources of Colorado Bend State Park.

Each year, we convene on the second weekend of the month from October through May to assist with these objectives while enjoying what we all love to do. The 2013-14 season saw great weather, awesome volunteers, and a nice smattering of new caves and karst features. Both long-time regulars and first-timers -- some sure to be future regulars -- came out for this year's project trips.

We had a big turnout for our first trip of the season, in October. The group was split into seven teams, and we headed out to all corners of the park and both sides of the river. Two teams crossed the river into Lampasas County and identified several new diggable caves. The remaining teams spread out to other areas of the park, surveying, tagging and documenting known caves, and searching for new karst. The team composed of Jim Kennedy, Yaz Avila, Tone Garot, and Jason Cook earned the title of 'Most Prolific Team' by successfully tagging and documenting 15 caves and karst features in Lively Pasture. Saturday night, nature treated the participants to a spectacular lightning show.

The November trip was composed of four teams, including special appearances from the Aggie Speleological Society and the Friends of Colorado Bend. Team members set out to relocate lost karst and push previously unpushable leads. All teams returned with potential for future trips.

Low temperatures and hope for good air made the December trip a great time for the final push to the depths of Dog and Butterfly Cave. Matt Zaldivar, Will Quast, and Kris Peña successfully pushed all leads in the bottom, including a 30 foot dome climb. They celebrated their successes by taking 40°F showers on the surface to wash off many layers of slick mud.

As is becoming a regular event of the Colorado Bend Project, we upgraded our accommodations for the January trip. The park was gracious enough to allow us use of the conference center for the TSA Winter Business Meeting and TCMA Board of Governors Meeting. Three teams of cavers, joined by park superintendent Kelby Bridwell, headed

out on Saturday morning. Kelby, Will, and Kris visited several caves in an effort to select new destinations for the park's cave tours. During these efforts, Kris helped determine non-tour caves by successfully wedging herself in an entrance. Ropes were required to hoist her to safety.

Meanwhile, Matt Turner and Jim Kennedy continued some promising digs in Lively Pasture and Kurt Menking and Dale Barnard were pleasantly surprised by the remaining potential of Grand Cedar Cave. All teams safely returned to the conference center to meet the arrivals for Sunday morning's meeting and enjoy a group dinner and evening movie.

The February trip was graced with the presence of no fewer than 19 members of the Aggie Speleological Society. The Aggies set off across the river, while Dale Barnard led Andy Zenker and Mimi Alexander for a return trip to Grand Cedar Cave. Jim Kennedy scooped up a few remaining Aggies to continue his efforts to clean up the project data. They also assisted in leading a group of college students into Turtle Shell Cave. Elsewhere in the park, the National Cave Rescue Commission's Regional Seminar had commenced. There were more than 30 students in attendance, and throughout the week long seminar, they trained in several of the park's classic caves.

The great weather in March had everyone in the mood to survey some new caves. Ten volunteers split into two groups to survey two previously reported caves - Happy Annie and Snow Hole. Happy Annie has a rather unpleasant vertical squeeze that has to be traversed on rope.

A minor incident occurred when one caver had to be hauled from above while briefly stuck in said vertical squeeze. Luckily, everyone lived to cave another day and returned to camp to share burgers and conversation around the campfire.

In April, five cavers returned to Happy Annie. Kris, Will, and Jeff Nichols braved the vertical squeeze one more time for the sake of the survey, while Liz Herren and Heather Tuček worked on a promising new entrance. Another team set out in the park to look for several caves with incorrect GPS locations but was unable to locate them.

Photo by Will Quast

Photo by Heather Tuček

By May, the weather was hot and the air was going south. A new project cave was scouted, leads were dug, and multiple cave locations were corrected and the caves were identified as having high potential for future trips.

We're ready to return with cooler temperatures and better air the weekend of October 17, and there's more than enough work to keep us busy through May.

2013-14 Participants Jessica Aguilar, Mimi Alexander, Yamin Avila, Dale Barnard, Dave Beachum, Brendon Brown, Neil Buckman, James Cally, Amy Campbell, Matt Carlin, Eneida Chesnut, Jason Cook, Galen Falgout, Will Farmer, Carson Fuls, Anthony Garot, Gerry Geletzke, Taylor George, Nicole Goodman, Westin Green, Maddie Harmon, Fernando Hernandez, Lydia Hernandez, Liz Herren, Alvis Hill, Dawn Hill, Grace Hixson, Kasey Irons, Aubri Jenson, Lori Karker, Jim Kennedy, Adam Kier, Kyle Leonard, Vivian Loftin, Kurt Menking, Ryan Monjaras, David Moore, Brad Nash, Jeff Nichols, Haley Nixon, Richi Patel, Kris Peña, Eric Puga, William Quast, Rachel Reddig, Yvonne Reyes, Tara Rice, Jeremiah Schoenert, Justin Shaw, Davey Siddors, Bryce Smith, Jessica Smith, Corina Tamas, Jennifer Thompson, Diana Tomchick, Alec Train, Liz Trapp, Heather Tuček, Matt Turner, Daniel Varedo, Ellie Watson, Mark Weisbecker, Leah Woods, Angela Young, John Young, Matt Zaldivar, Andy Zenker.

CBKP PROJECT FACTS

Total Individual Participants:	67
Drive Time:	528 hrs
OR *time to fly around the world 12 times*	
Field Time:	676 hrs
OR *4 weeks and 4 hrs*	
Visits to Known Caves and Karst Features:	84
Caves Surveyed:	6
New Caves and Karst Features Discovered:	5
Unwanted Nighttime Visitors:	1
Coldest Night:	27°
Hottest Karst-Walking Day:	90°

Photo by Kris Pena

LEFT PAGE: Matt Zaldivar, Kris Peña, and Will Quast successful return from the bottom of Dog and Butterfly Cave.

NCRC students: "Slow Haul!"

ABOVE - CLOCK WISE: A rat snake inside of Mouse Hole Cave.

Liz Herren coming out of Annie's Panties Entrance.

Will Quast pushing through bad air in Mystery Hole Cave.

DROPPING IN... MY FIRST YEAR CAVING

Scott Cogburn

WHEN I WAS A BOY, I REMEMBER MY FIRST TIME SEEING A CAVE.

It was in the '70's. My parents packed up our matching plaid suitcases one Friday evening. We all climbed into our blue station wagon with vinyl blue seats that were hot and sticky in the muggy Houston summer, and drove west towards the setting sun and...adventure. They informed me we were going to Natural Bridge Caverns in New Braunfels, Texas.

I was super-excited, and the caverns did not disappoint! I still remember echoes of the awe and adrenaline I felt descending the winding concrete path through the underground wonders of Natural Bridge.

For the first time, I saw and learned about stalactites, stalagmites, columns, flowstone, and my personal favorite: fried eggs. I was hooked.

Fast forward 40 years, a number of show caves, a wild cave tour or two, and one small, crazily fun, wild cave adventure with some seminary friends in the hills of eastern Kentucky, later. We were back living in the Houston area again. I'm in my closet looking at an unused, yellow Edelrid caving helmet that I bought right before we had our two kids eight years ago. It has a nice layer of dust on it since it has been patiently… waiting.It is time.

So, I searched around on the Internet for caving groups in Houston. I had no idea they were called "grottos" at this point. I found the Greater Houston Grotto website, and their Meet Up page. The webpage said they were meeting on the third Tuesday of the month. Honestly, I didn't know what to expect. What do spelunkers look like? (I didn't know we liked to be called "cavers" then!) Is it going to be a bunch of grizzly looking old dudes with headlamps huddled in a darkened room? Are they friendly? Will they be happy I, a real cave newbie, am walking into their darkened room? Lots of questions were running through my mind. However, coupled with these thoughts was a sense of adventure in thinking about caves again, about connecting with people that might want to go in a cave, and maybe exploring caves that aren't on the beaten path? So, this past September 2013, I dropped in…on the meeting.

Well, it turns out that the "darkened room" was a brightly lit climbing gym. It turned out that the "grizzly old dudes" were there, but there were also young and older professional looking guys. Also, believe it or not (you will because, since you are reading this, you already know), there were pretty ladies, young and not quite as young, who caved at the meeting as well! Who would have thought? I didn't have to sit in a special newbie chair in the corner either. They all were very friendly, old dudes to young ladies, and welcomed me to the meeting! We talked about caving. I saw pictures of cave trips they had been on, and pictures of cool caves I had never heard of that they had explored. We talked, and I got to know some people. I had a great time!

Now that I had found what I thought at the time was a good caving group, I couldn't wait to actually explore a cave with these people. My first newbie trip was supposed to be to Robber Baron cave in San Antonio, TX. However, due to a hurricane down in Mexico, the trip got rained out. Bummer. What can I do caving related now? Well, it turns out that my first "cave trip" with the grotto ended up not being to cave at all, but to a convention of sorts. So, on a really cold weekend in the fall, the Texas Cavers Reunion 2013,(or just TCR to the initiated) turned out to be my first grotto trip.

Again, I had some questions which I ended up scrapping and just went with an open mind. Afterward, I realized my initial questions would not have prepared me for what I was about to experience anyway. On my own I would not have come up with questions like: "Why is there an obstacle course made out of very tight looking rectangular boxes, picnic tables, logs, and string?" "Why is there a mud pit looking thing down the hill?" ; "Why are all these people dressed up in steam punk costumes going up and down the road?"; "How did I not know during the 4½ years before graduating from Texas A&M that we actually have a caving club, and that is called, hilariously enough, A.S.S.?"; "Why is that really tan man at the end of the road building what looks like a giant hot tub, and arranging old carpet squares around it?"; "Why are people delivering wood to said man?" and, after it got dark, there were some other questions of a more risqué nature that I would need to ask! All questions and answers aside though, I had a blast! I got to know some of my grotto members better, met some new people from different parts of Texas, and ate some great food. I learned quite a bit more about caves, and I laughed a lot. Also, I began to understand that amidst the diversity of appearance, ages, schools of thought, religious or non-religious affiliations, and backgrounds, there existed a community of helpful, fun, crazy, and caring individuals brought together by their love for caving. I was better for dropping in…to TCR.

Aren't you ready for a cave story? I am! I was then, too…so here it comes.

After TCR, I started hearing rumors which turned to fact about a trip to some caves called Deep and Punkin way out in West Texas near the border of Mexico. I was ready, I thought. It turned out that I needed to be basically proficient with something called vertical rope work, or single rope techniques (SRT), if I wanted to explore both of the caves. One was a crawl in cave, which I learned was called a "horizontal" cave, and the other was a cave you had to use ropes to get into and out of, which was called a "vertical" cave. Hello! I thought we were just going to be crawling through holes and stuff. What's this? However, I wanted to explore as much as possible, and so I began learning rope techniques at the rock gym. I'd learned to rappel in the Marine Corps, but not climb rope. So, I went about relearning to rappel with this new cave gear, and then learning climbing techniques from the beginning. When I got the basics down o.k., I got to go practice on the trees in one of the member's backyard. Apparently, I got the basics down good enough after some practice sessions that I was cleared to "drop" Punkin. I was now ready!

"S#@!...‹breath›...What the hell am I doing?...‹breath›…Am I ready?...‹breath›…AM I?," were some of the thoughts going through my head as I was now all rigged up in my brand new vertical gear, locked off on my descender, and about to drop over the edge of the then, FREAKING GIANT, pit with what, at the time, seemed like the very inappropriate sweet name of Punkin'. On that freezing cold day, I would

have definitely named it something more ominous like the Pit of Death, Doom, Hell's Mouth, or something besides sweet Punkin. I dropped in, and…it was totally fun! Memories of rappelling in the Marine Corps came back to me, as well as ones from all of our training practices. "I can do this! You've done this before. Have fun," were the happier thoughts I was now thinking. So, I took my time, and had a blast. I rappelled down with no problems. Whew! Safe at the bottom, and now I can go exploring. I had fun looking around the bottom of Punkin. However, I can't honestly say that I had no worries at this point, because, as the old saying goes, "What comes down, must come up!" Isn't that the saying? No? Well, for vertical caving it is. It's kind of crazy that way. I was wandering around the bottom, stealing furtive glances up at that FREAKING GIANT wide open climb I was about to have to make to get out of this pit. I would ignore it, wander around some more, focus on one of my fellow cavers rappelling down or climbing out, ignore it…rinse and repeat…until I finally had to take my turn and climb out. For some of you reading this, you will totally not get my predicament. Others, however, might be nodding their head in understanding or even have a slight chill at the thought of being suspended in the air in the middle of nothing in a big pit on a little tiny rope. One quick fact that will make my feelings more understandable: I've always been really scared of heights. I've always tried to push myself and get better about it, which I have over time. Underneath though, it still wells up from time to time. I mean I understand 100% that I am locked in by two points of contact, that my gear is totally new and has been checked, that I am following all the safety protocols, and that I have just watched people of my exact skill level just do exactly what I am now doing.

I AM STILL REALLY SCARED THOUGH! The irrational part of my brain is telling me that, somehow, my measly 180 lb mass is going to pull down that giant rock lip that the 20 million kilonewton or whatever rated bolts are attached to and I will fall and die. Good times. I climbed out though. I made it. I did it, and I am glad that I did. Afterwards, I felt a massive adrenalin rush, and I had so much fun going over and exploring Deep Cave, too. Sometimes, dropping in and climbing out make you grow. I was better for dropping in…sweet Punkin.

In Deep Cave, as at TCR, I continued learning about the caving community. A guy, who caves without a shirt [Tom Rogers, Bexar Grotto], was gracious enough to take time out of his weekend to guide us through Deep. Later, on a trip to Jester Cave in Oklahoma, a gal who shared my Jeep ride and who might happen to edit this article for the Texas Caver [Jill Orr, Bexar Grotto] regaled us with funny stories, cave and non-cave related. On the same trip, the duo from Dallas, an energetic white headed scion of the caving community and a very gracious female professor [Bill Steele, and Diana Tomchick, DFW Grotto], spent a weekend leading us through the beautiful gypsum cave, opening their home to us, and helped us create some great memories and friendships along the way.

During the tail end of May, while eating an awesome breakfast at the Liberty Diner at TAG, which stands for the border area of Tennessee, Alabama, and Georgia which has a ton of awesome caves, we met a tall, lanky, super-cool young man who ended up caving with us and introducing us to some of his favorite caves in the area. He showed us Neversink Pit, Stephen's Gap, and War Eagle. (Yes, I was dumb enough to get back on rope!) On the same trip, we met a raven haired teacher from Georgia, who lived in the Dallas area for a longtime, and he took time out of his weekend to lead us through Cemetery Pit. Before the times on these trips, during them, and after them have been a group of people who have constantly been by my side helping me to learn about caving, teaching me about horizontal and vertical techniques, sharing stories of good times and bad times, laughing (if you know me, you know lots of laughing!), and just being friends. I said earlier I thought at the time I had a good caving group. Well, through this year I have found out I am a part of a GREAT caving group. They are my grotto. They are good friends. They are awesome! Through all of these people and more, I have seen the gracious, caring, fun, and crazy nature of this community, and have grown to feel myself a part of it. I'm glad I dropped in…to all of it.

MEETING MINUTES

MAY 3, 2014
Convened at Cave Without a Name, Boerne, Texas

Submitted by Heather Tuček

Officers Present

Kurt Menking – Chairman,Roger Moore – Vice-Chairman, Ann Scott – Treasurer, Heather Tuček – Secretary

TSA Members and Cavers in Attendance

Orion Knox, Jocie Hooper, Kurt Menking, Jay Jorden, Kris Pena, Roger Moore, William Quast, Charles Goldsmith, Mike Burrell, Heather Tuček

Welcome and Introductions/Chairman's Report

(Menking) Meeting called to order at 4:55pm. The secretary passed out the minutes from last meeting, and Kurt asked to amend/approve. Motion by Jay Jorden to approve, Ann Scott seconds. Motion carries.

Kurt thanks everyone for being here. Mentions that he likes the venue. Not much to report, some things going on here and there, but not much.

One of the issues lately in the caving world has been an ethics issue, mostly with new cavers. Kurt has presented at the ATM Grotto, and plans to do it at the UT Grotto. He is willing to visit to give the presentation himself, or pass along the Powerpoint. He mentions that a lot of new kids, especially the Aggies have a lack of consistent leadership, so they've never been taught the things they should know. Many grottos may not be teaching new people. Issues like standard gate etiquette, etc. if it's not communicated, it's just not known. Kurt would love people to use this information, and pass it around. Orion Knox mentioned that it would be a good article for the Texas Caver. Kurt says it works well as an interactive, and goes over really well. He will give the program at the Bexar Grotto as soon as an opening appears. The Powerpoint is small enough to pass around, but Kurt is also willing to travel. A lot of people just get it over time, they aren't taught. He's not saying it's an all inclusive presentation, but it's good start. Charles Goldsmith wants to put the presentation on CaveTex and the website.

Kurt mentioned some personal anecdotes as well, such as chain of locks. Many times people have gotten locked into a property because a lock gets left out of the loop.

He added that lots of new people don't understand that the work it took to get owner relations was huge. For caves, 99% are on owner property, or Texas Park & Wildlife property, and if you screw up, you could screw up a lot. General etiquette is to not do something stupid.

Kurt tells Roger Moore "Great job on the Convention."

ViceChairman's Report

(Moore) Roger says that he is taking notes as goes along about the Vice-chair responsibilities, and keep things in a format that he will be able to pass along to next vice chair. Orion asked how many people we had at the convention, Heather Tuček reported that we have 127 registered.

Secretary's Report

(Tuček) The membership Database is current. We got more membership renewals and new people joining as a result of having updated info on hand at Convention. Jocie Hooper said she liked getting the reminder email that her membership was coming due. Kurt mentioned we'll do the same at TCR.

Treasurer's Report

(Scott) It took some time, but Ann has managed to get signatures on file at Frost Bank, write checks, receipts and reimbursements, all with quick turnarounds. We currently have $12400.46 in the bank as of May 1st. We are doing well at monitoring the Paypal payments, Ann forwards each email to Heather to ensure a 2nd copy of the payments. Butch Fralia set us up to get Paypal notifications sent directly to us. So far, we are a well-oiled machine except for the snail mail. Ann hasn't been riding Ron Ralph about going to get the mail, since it's at the same place as TCMA mail, and he picks it up for us. She's been re-considering Ron's offer for her to take the key, since we have not been getting mail in a timely manner. We need to figure out mail retrieval.

TSA Projects

(Kennedy) Absent

Standing Committee Reports

Publications

(Orr) Absent. Kurt says that Jill is out for [6] months in Europe, but she will organize Texas Caver while she is away. She needs articles! That's the hard part. Jill did well initially, and would email and call and harass, but she has lost interest in that. We all need to help getting people at our individual grottos to write reports to help her out. We are behind one full issue. The deadline for the March issue is today. Part of it was lack of articles, part is Jill. She doesn't seem to want to drop the title, but doesn't like hounding people. As much as we can help out to drum interest to or to write articles ourselves, will be much appreciated.

Website

(Fralia) Absent. It was mentioned that Butch is good about getting stuff up on the website as soon as you bring it up to him.

Membership

(Tuček) Kurt mentions that we are doing well at drumming up new business. Ann wondered wasn't there an old business item about getting brochures? Kurt said there is one that Jill sent out, it just hasn't been printed. He doesn't see need to change or modify, and it would be good to pass them out at TCR and at grotto meetings. Mike Burrell adds that State Parks would be good too.

Ann asks if we can move forward on that. Will Quast said that Colorado Bend State Park would offer brochures if they had them. Kurt asked how many we want. Jocie Hooper says maybe 1000, but Mike says that's not enough. Kurt can't remember if we have a price for printing, or if Jill could get one. Kurt will do the legwork on that. He asks if we want to discuss or decide next meeting. Kurt will talk with the officers about costs and if we want to move ahead. Ann suggests to get price quote for 500 and for 1000.

Kurt says the design needs to be something that will last a long time. Mike said that you'd be surprised at how cheap 10,000 brochures are, compared to 1000. If they are at state parks, we'll go through that quantity, no problem. Roger Moore said that the Greater Houston Grotto puts listing on Meetup, a social media. Heather Tuček said that at the UT Grotto, we have so many people coming to beginner trips, that using Meetup would be a mess. Roger said it's been a good recruitment tool for people who move to Houston. Roger made a motion to move forward with the brochures, Ann seconded. Orion Knox asked for a price breakup. Kris Pena asked about quality. Mike says that rack cards are cheaper than 6 panel designs.

Kurt says the design it a 6 panel brochure with a perforated panel for a member registration form. It has contact information, website, etc., plus coloured photos of caves and TSA statement of purpose etc. Charles Goldsmith says we have the extra money, why don't we do this right. Get nice paper, etc. Kurt agrees it's a good investment.

Conservation

(Open) None

Fundraising

(Germany) Absent

Store

(Graves) Absent. LeeJay mentioned earlier that he's sold about $30 worth of stuff at Convention so far.

Old Business

Kelby Bridwell at Colorado Bend State Park said that they'd sell stickers at the park gift shop if we'd like.

New Business

- The topic has been brought up of a possible fee for vendors at Spring Convention. Kurt Menking said TCR doesn't sell spots, and we can't charge there since it's a TCR function not TSA. But we can do it here. We have TCMA and TSS booths on a consistent basis. Occasionally Becky Jones or someone else will show up with gear. Jay Jorden said that what we'd get from the vendors, we'd lose in goodwill if we start charging. Kurt said that one of the things that motivated it was a lack of interest in advertisements in the Texas Caver. There could be a way that if you are a vendor here, it would

TSA MEETINGS

ARE OPEN TO MEMBERS AND NON-MEMBERS. JOIN US AT OUR NEXT MEETING AT THE TCR, AFTER TCMA'S DON'T-MISS FUND RAISING BREAKFAST ON SUNDAY.

give you an ad in the Texas Caver. Ann Scott read an email describing the idea. Jill proposes that all Commercial Vendors pay sponsorship for booth space at future TSA conventions.

"They have two choices: Salamander Level, $25 - Booth space includes a sponsor tab (or Logo) on the TSA Convention web page with a link to their website if they have one, and their logo or name listed in the TSA Program under Vendors Row.Bat Flight Level, $50 - All the above, as well as a ¼ page color ad in the Texas Caver, and a letter size color poster in the registration booth (either their design or mine)."

Ann said that really it's promoting advertising. From her experience as someone who goes to conventions all the time, she knows that you can have a booth at a big convention and it could cost $1200. Jocie Hooper said that she agrees with Orion Knox that it's nice for new cavers to know what books and gear are available. Kurt tells new cavers to wait for convention to get stuff, in order to keep it in the caver community, rather than order off the internet and not know exactly what you're getting. Charles Goldsmith said that we should have some incentive to bring vendors in to keep them coming back. Kurt asked what incentives, and Charles suggested free advertising in the next issue of the Texas Caver, if they show up.

Ann said that if they want a continuing ad, then at that point, they can pay normal price for it. Jocie reminded us that Bob won't travel anymore. Ann wondered do we need to have some sort of vote on this? There was no motion. The consensus was that it was not a good idea. Orion said it's to the benefit of the organization to have them here. Charles made a motion to offer an ad in the next issue of the Texas Caver after they show up to the event. And if they want to continue running that ad, they can pay to continue. Orion asks for sizes that are available. Ann says there is business card, ¼ page, ½ page, and full page. Ann used to do ads for Becky. Heather Tuček seconds. We will negotiate with Jill about the size of free ad. Motion carries. Kurt will work with Jill on it. Charles said Jill mentioned a quarter page. Jocie said we may put a blurb in the next Texas Caver to let vendors know about the new idea. Ann said it should be a message from the president.

Charles asked Roger Moore if he will do the Convention next year still. One of the reasons that Roger was comfortable doing it the first year is that he's comfortable with the location. Mike Burrell said it kept getting pushed back and back since there's something going on every single week. Charles said that he knows that people want to move it, but it's not feasible. Kurt said that it's economically a good idea to stay and doesn't see any reason to change it. Kurt will put together a president's letter for this next Texas Caver. Roger said to directly try to solicit, instead of just relying on mass communication.

Open Membership Comments

- Charles Goldsmith said that using a Paypal swiper to let people use credit cards for registration could be an option. He states that a lot of people would prefer to use a card than a cash or check. Kurt said he' rather had used a credit card. Ann Scott will look into it as an option and see what the details are. Charles says you can look up rates on the website. Kurt says the treasurer can look into that. It wouldn't need a vote, if the board all agrees, then that is good enough. We will discuss if it's an acceptable deal.
- Jay Jorden asked where TCR is this year, and Kurt said somewhere along the Guadalupe River. Jocie Hooper said Pete Strickland and Don Arburn will go look at the location tomorrow. Kurt said it has Snookie's Cave on-site. There are fossils, teeth and bones from the Pleistocene Era. There is also another cave on an adjacent property, and cliffs to rappel on. Plus there's flowing water there. For sure there will not be water at Paradise Canyon by October. There was none last week when Kurt was there, only one trapped pool of water. People were still swimming but…. There was no water movement at all. There is nothing behind the dam, and only 3% water left in Medina Lake.
- Charles asked about a lifetime membership for regular members. Kurt said we can talk about revisiting membership levels.

Adjourn Meeting

Kurt Menking made the call to adjourn. Ann Scott seconded. Motion carries. Meeting adjourned 5:44pm.

HONEY CREEK CAVE LEAD LIST

SEPTEMBER 2014

Provided by Geroge Veni

1. "*" Indicates the lead is good given the passage or general area it happens to be in. ** is for the cave's best leads. No asterisk is for low priority leads.
2. Left and Right are given relative to traveling into a passage. Along the Stream Trunk they are given facing upstream.
3. This list, and the survey notes on which it is based, have the passages and leads arranged as they are encountered heading into the cave from the spring entrance. The order is generally in the upstream direction but not necessarily so.
4. The Stream Trunk is the passage which continues through the Grand Finale and the TB Survey from near Yo Mama. It is not the stream passage leading past Yo Mama to the Shaft Entrance.
5. The accuracy and detail of this list is based on the survey notes, the personal knowledge of the compiler, and any details relayed to him. Please send all additions, corrections and deletions to:

   G. Veni, 507 E. Chapman, Carlsbad, New Mexico 88220-9383.
   505-234-1409 gveni@warpdriveonline.com.

SX Survey: 1 lead

SX29 SX passage ended in sump on 20 Dec 85 during high water. Worth rechecking during low water. Sump is a crawlway 0.4 m high by 0.7 m wide.

QA Survey: 25 leads

QA60 10 m high dome with lead. Small side passage off 9 m high dome.

QA69 + Three leads off dome. Some bolts may be needed.

QA92 Two leads off dome.

QA98 7 m high dome with lead.

QA110 Dome lead in side passage off the O.K. Room.

QA111 Passage at top of 10 m high dome.

*QA113 Side lead on left inside passage off the O.K. Room. Averages 1.3 m high by 0.8 m wide and goes 20 m to flowstone blockage. Passage continues same size on other side of flowstone but hammer and chisel is needed to follow it. No air or water flow. Checked in Oct. 88 by Brian Burton (who says its a bad lead) and Doug Allen (who says its worth going back to push).

*QA118 Side passage off the O.K. Room continues as a tight and muddy pseudo sump. Needs enlarging. Passage forks on far side with a sump to the right and another pseudo sump straight ahead.

QA122 Free-climbable upper level lead on right.

QA123 Upper level lead on right.

QA129 Lead at top of 20 m high dome; needs bolt climb. Adjacent dome slightly off the passage has been free-climbed 12 m and still goes but doesn't look good.

QA155 Upper level lead.

QA164 Three free-climbable domes between QA164 and QA165.

QA170 Upper level.

QA171 Upper level.

QA191 Upper level.

QA197 Lead at top of 4.5 m high dome.

*QA199 Side passage on left trending 230 degrees. Passage goes off over flowstone at 0.3 m high by 2.5 m wide. Tight; needs considerable enlarging. No air flow observed but passage size should be good beyond the constriction.

*QA241 Passage continues 1 m in diameter but needs digging.

QU Survey: (passage off QA49)

QU1-9 Passage needs to be resurveyed. Ends at impassible sump.

QM Survey: 5 leads (passage to M Survey)

QM4 1 m wide infeeder on right. Station not flagged.

*QM5 Passage on left to high dome with lead, and to a crawl.

QM16 Infeeder on left.

QM26 Side passage on left.

QB Survey: 3 leads (passage off QA230)

QB8 Small side passage on left.

QB40 Dome lead in ceiling joint.

*QB60 Passage continues 0.8 m high by 1 m wide.

QC Survey: 1 lead (passage off QA237)

*QC17 Passage lowers to a tight belly crawl with 8 cm max airspace.

D Survey: 7 leads (stream trunk upstream of Mile Dome)

D13 Dome lead, 6 m high; needs bolt climb.

D17 3 dome leads between D16 17, formed along same ceiling joint and probably interconnected. Projections 4 5 m above the floor might be lassoed with a rope.

D18 Dome lead. Projection 5 m above floor can be lassoed.

D20 Two dome leads that may interconnect. A rope could be thrown over a natural bridge located 6 m above the floor.

L Survey: 1 lead (Creep in the Deep)

L22 L survey ends in a low sump. Poor dive prospect. Low air space can be felt on far side of the sump with feet.

M Survey: 11 leads (Piso de Hueso)

M46 4 cm of air space with a low flow of water streaming out. A too tight mud-hole in the ceiling visibly opened into another passage but needs digging and is small, 0.2 m by 0.2 m.

M49 Upper level room, needs a bolt or two to climb into it.

M58 Upper level between M58 and M61. Roof of upper level about 7 m above the main passage's floor.

M62 Two leads in 10 m high domes. Not clear if it's two leads in one dome or one lead in each of the two domes.

M64 Upper room. The room's ceiling is 7 m above the floor of the main passage.

M69 Small lead off dome.

M75 Small passage with considerable formation growth (perhaps obstructing the passage?).

*M78 1.0 m high by 0.5 m wide infeeder on left. Contributes half the water in the M survey.

M92 1 m high and wide side passage on left gets too narrow after short way. Worth surveying?

M93 Tall, thin side lead on right.

MA Survey: 2 leads (passage of M82)

MA17 Lower level stream extends from dome; goes very small. Mark Minton reports this and MA33 have been surveyed as far as reasonably possible and that they are not viable leads. However, other notes say…

MA33 Passage continues as a small crawl (see note for MA17).

N Survey: 2 leads (Rocky and Bullwinkle)

N20 Dome lead. Dome is 8 m high.

*N75 Hole at top of dome at end of N passage. Possible passage at top?

AK Survey: 2 leads (W30 Passage)

AK3 Possible passage at top of dome.

AK59 Small side passage on left. May need digging to enter. Gets bigger after 2 m but could not see around the corner.

AK100 AK passage ends at 4 m high dome with a possible lead at the top.

E Survey: 1 lead (stream trunk from R Survey to Sweet Sue Falls)

E12 Large dome to upper level. May be free-climbable or will need 1 2 bolts.

R, RE, and RA Survey: 5 leads (Trespassage)

RE7 Two upper level leads.

RE48 Paradise Dome, 7 m high by 15 m long and 6 m wide, has upper level lead. May tie to upper level off REB3.

*RE89 Good infeeder on right.

*RE134 RE Survey continues as a meter diameter crawl. Marked with a single red string.

RED Survey: 2 leads (side passage of RE2)

RED5 Two free-climbable domes about 4 m high with possible passage at top.

REA Survey: 2 leads (side passage of RE28)

*REA19 T intersection with low passages off both ways averaging 0.5 m high by 1.0 m wide.

REB Survey: 1 lead (Great White Way passage off RE41)

REB3 4 m climb into interconnected domes. All air flow in REB passage goes up domes then heads 8 m toward main RE passage before ending in a mud dig. Passage may tie into upper level lead off Paradise Dome (RE48).

RF Survey: 1 lead (passage of RE69)

RF12 Passage continues as 0.6 high by 0.8 m wide crawl.

TA Survey: 6 leads (Try Again Survey)

TA13 4 m high breakdown dome. Located 4 m downstream of TA13.

TA22 Two dome leads. Dome chocked with boulders 3 m up; can see over 8 m high.

TA32 Small passage on left. Needs some digging.

TA76 High lead in wall of Grand Finale. Not visible from floor, but from passage visible from floor that Jim Bowden climbed up to. Needs bolts.

TA82 Diggable side lead (reached via Yo Mama to bypass sump)

TD Survey: 3 leads (Devil's Head side passage off TA27)

TD3 2 m diameter by 5 m high dome. May have passage at top. May need a bolt assist.

TD18 Passage continues as a low air dig possibly could be enlarged.

TD23 Tar Baby Tunnel becomes tight by formation blockage; reported as a poor quality dig.

TB Survey: 9 leads (stream trunk reached through the TA Survey)

TB65 Small infeeder on left may go with some digging.

TB66 8 m high dome with slot at the top.

TB75 Side lead on left with 0.1 m of airspace.

*TB120 Small muddy inflowing stream on left.

TB136 Small infeeder on right. Goes 5 m to very low airspace.

*TB189 Tight infeeder on left. 0.5 m high by 0.8 m wide.

TB225 Tight infeeder on left may be accessible with some chiseling around massive flowstone entering main passage.

TB300 Tight lead infeeder on left.

TL and TE Surveys, 1 lead (loop off TB2 and TB4)

TE12 Tight upper level crack.

TC Survey: 13 leads (side passage off TB14, connect to BT Survey off the Boneyard)

TC13 0.3 m high by 0.5 m wide passage to right. Goes at least 3 m very tight. Probably needs digging.

TC19 Passage at top of 5 m high dome.

TC30 Infeeder on left. 0.5 m high by 0.7 m wide.

TC38 Very small infeeder on left. Major dig to push it.

TC43 Two 5 m high domes with possible leads at the top. May need hammer to gain entry.

TC49 5 m high dome with lead. May need hammer to gain entry.

TC51 5 m high dome with lead, 5 m downstream of TC51. May need hammer to gain entry.

*TC62 1 m wide passage on right.

TC68 Possible lead and dome (3 m) on right in low space.

TC83 Station is flagged and lead is shown on sketch off the left wall, but there is no verbal description.

TC85 Very small 'lead' on left (station not flagged).

*TC97 Fault guided side passage on left leads 5 m to 9 m high dome. Small hole in dome takes overflow from TC towards the Boneyard, will need substantial digging. Possible lead also up in dome.

TG Survey: 2 leads (side passage off TC53)

TG69 Body tight, dig as you go infeeder on left.

TG70 Passage continues grimly at 1 m wide by 0.5 m high. Single flag left at TG69 as marker.

TH Survey: 1 lead (side passage at TC73)

TH11 Passage continues most grim at 1.9 m wide, 0.7 m high, and only 5 cm of airspace.

TF Survey: 1 lead (side passage at TB15)

TF6 Passage ends in flowstone plug but goes up 1-3 m high dome with a very small hammer lead.

TZ Survey: 5 leads (major infeeder off TB112)

TZ59 Room off to the left. Can see into it but not enterable without excavation (digging?). Not clear if the entire room is visible from the TZ or if parts of it cannot be seen to justify it as a lead.

TZ60 8 m dome goes up to a room. Not clear from notes if the room was explored or if it's a lead.

TZ67 Mud filled passage. Diggable?

TZ73 Very grim lead on left.

TZ83 The worst place in Honey Creek Cave. Passage continues with air and water flow but impossible to follow without hammering and enlarging of the ceiling and with no apparent end in sight. Passage is 1.3 m wide but only 0.1 m high between bedrock floor and solid travertine ceiling.

TM Survey: 2 leads (passage off TB175)

TM8 Side passage passable only for small cavers; 0.8 m high by 0.5 m wide.

TM20 Passage continues as a low grim crawl measuring 0.5 m high by 1 m wide.

TW Survey: 2 leads (passage off TB193)

TW16 Flagged infeeder on left, hardly passable. No indication if it is diggable.

*TW23 Passage continues 1 m high by 0.6 m wide.

TS Survey: 2 leads (passage off TW20)

*TS3 Passage splits within sight of this station; the left passage is tight and impassable while the right passage is more tight but more promising. No indication if left passage is worth digging.

Q Survey: 1 lead (stream passage downstream of Trifurcation)

Q3 Dome lead between Q3 and Q4 needs 1 2 bolts, but it would be much easier to use a 4 m extension ladder. May connect to Clam Shell Dome passage.

PW and PWD Surveys, 1 lead (Clam Shell Dome passage).

PWD12 Michael's Butt Hole continues as a lead needing to be enlarged in progress. Possible to see into next drop, and dropped rocks occasionally hit water. Probably drops into main stream passage. This lead requires rope work. Ropes are rigged. The vertical caving of Honey Creek.

SH Survey: 6 leads (Surface Ho/Sump Ho)

SH36 Small passage on right, 0.5 m high and wide; needs a little digging to get into.

SH39 Small muddy infeeder on left.

SH42 5 m high dome with possible lead at top (Leads up to SH43 are keyed to station numbers of the resurvey).

SH48 Lead?? Notes not clear.

SH85 Dome lead.

SH87 Dome lead.

SA Survey: 1 lead (passage off SH51)

SA6 Passage explored another 8 9 m; needs digging and easy floor to dig, but a grim prospect.

BD Survey: 1 lead (Birthday Passage)

*BD27 Passage continues 1 m wide by 0.6 m high, but small sledge is needed to knock a rock out of the way. Airflow has been occasionally noted from the BD, but it's not clear if it comes this passage or the dome that precedes it.

CC Survey: 7 leads (Chumps Consolation)

CC33 Passage on right goes to 15+ m high dome with big formations.

CC58 Grim side lead on left.

CC90 Side passage on right that goes to dome, then grim.

CC115 Ceiling level slot.

CC117 15 m high dome with hole at the top.

CC133 Small infeeding passage on right.

*CC139 Main passage continues at 0.6 m high by 0.8 m wide.

BF and BSG Surveys, 2 leads (Boneyard Passage to First Boneyard Divide)

BF167 Small side passage on right; may not be passable.

BSG6 High lead in alcove on left.

BS Survey: 1 lead (side passage off BF116)

*BS15 Passage continues as a wet muddy crawlway, zig zagging for about 10 short stations, then becomes tall, straight and narrow as at the passage's beginning.

BM Survey: 1 lead (side passage of BF121)

BM11 Meter diameter mud tube continues for several short survey shots (avg = 2 m) to possible dig.

BT Survey: 1 lead (side passage off BF184, connects to TC Survey)

BT22 6 m high dome climb on flowstone. Free climbable about halfway but a bolt or grappling hook is needed for the rest of the climb. Nearest flagged station at BT23.

BG Survey: 6 leads (upstream passage at First Boneyard Divide)

BG15 8 m high dome with drip.

BG16 Saturn 5 Dome; 9 m high dome with drip.

*BG39 Infeeder on left at 240 degrees carries much water. Goes to dam which may need bashing. No air flow. Passage is very small.

BG41 Upper dome room, too tight to enter but has good echo.

BG120 Impassibly small infeeder on right. Could be dug open.

BG133 Perseverance Dome. +7 m high. Uncertain if or how much it opens at the top. Possible source for BG airflow and trash.

BH Survey: 4 leads (passage off BG33)

BH86 Half the BH water comes from an infeeder on the right; clean, rises steeply, good echo (maybe leads to a dome?) but needs hammer to enlarge.

BH89 Small infeeder on left; 0.5 m high by 0.8 m wide, with sinuous mud banks.

BH95 Dry lead on right. 1 m wide and only 0.15 m high. Needs digging.

*BH100 Passage continues 0.4 m high by 1 m wide to low air dig. Looks grim but has good air flow. May connect to TZ.

BRK Survey: 3 leads (downstream of First Boneyard Divide)

BRK15 10 m high dome with lead at top.

BRK39 5 m high Showerstall dome with lead at top reported by Mark Minton.

BRK61 Upstream water divide passage; 0.5 m high by 1.0 m wide. Goes 6 m and gets very tight.

LF Survey: 2 leads (Continuation of BRK Survey to and beyond sump)

LF14A Small sump with water flowing into the LF passage.

*LF20 Air and water flow suggest this is a good lead, but flowstone covered by thick layer of clay will need enlarging.

KC Survey: 2 leads (stream passage upstream of Bifurcation)

KC22 Small infeeder on right. 0.2 m high. May go with hammer enlarging or digging but not sure if it's worth the trouble. Needs to be looked at and assessed.

KC24 8 10 m high dome along a fault with chocked boulders.

US (upstream original water divide) and BMA (Beat My Ass) Surveys; Ties the divide to the Boneyard, 1 lead.

US40 Doolin's Dome, 15 20 m high with a trickling waterfall, needs climbing.

DS, DSA, and DT Survey: 2 leads (far downstream side of original water divide)

*DS17 1.2 m high by 0.4 m wide infeeder on left just before DS17.

**DSA28 Downstream sump. Surveyed 21.3 m in poor visibility to DSA28 and continues 1m high by 0.5 m wide. Lots of water.

DR Survey: 1 lead (side passage of DS11)

DR15 Passage continues as a low water crawl, 0.8 m high and wide (single flag).

HS Survey: 3 leads (Cibolo Passage, originally called the Holy Shit! Passage)

*HS5 Small infeeder on left. Not indicated on sketch. Probably near HS5. Dug back 3 4 m, goes as dig blowing all the HS air flow. Grim dig but the air is enticing.

HS101-HS72 This area was surveyed but not sketched. Near the last couple of stations are two passages on the right, possibly oxbows

JB Survey: 1 lead (continuation of the HS Survey beyond HS72)

JB7-JB1 A short parallel passage in this area needs surveying.

JC and JCHS Surveys: 1 lead

HS and J Continuation of theB surveys in and beyond far upstream sumps.

JCHS27-JCHS29 This section should be resurveyed. It was surveyed during low visibility.

JCHS44-JCHS45 Compass and pace survey to the sump due to lack of time, and which should be resurveyed.

**JCHS45 Passage sumps and continued unexplored.

HT Survey: 1 lead (side passage of HS21)

HT3 Passage continues as a grim, tight, narrow, dig as you go water crawl (single flag).

SURVEY NOTES

Areas That Need To Resurveyed or Resketched:

QU 1-9 needs to be resurveyed (blunders in data).

CC 1 87 notes for 16 87 are missing

DS, DT & HS 1 45 lack inclinations/vertical control

DS 122-132 azimuths do not match sketch, DS132-154 may not need resurveying

HS 33 45, HS 72-101, JB1-7, JC1-35, LF 1 23 (no sketch was made)

LF 23 51 (compass & pace survey without sketch)

N 25 65 (notes are missing)

SH 43 87 SM 1 8 (notes are missing)

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