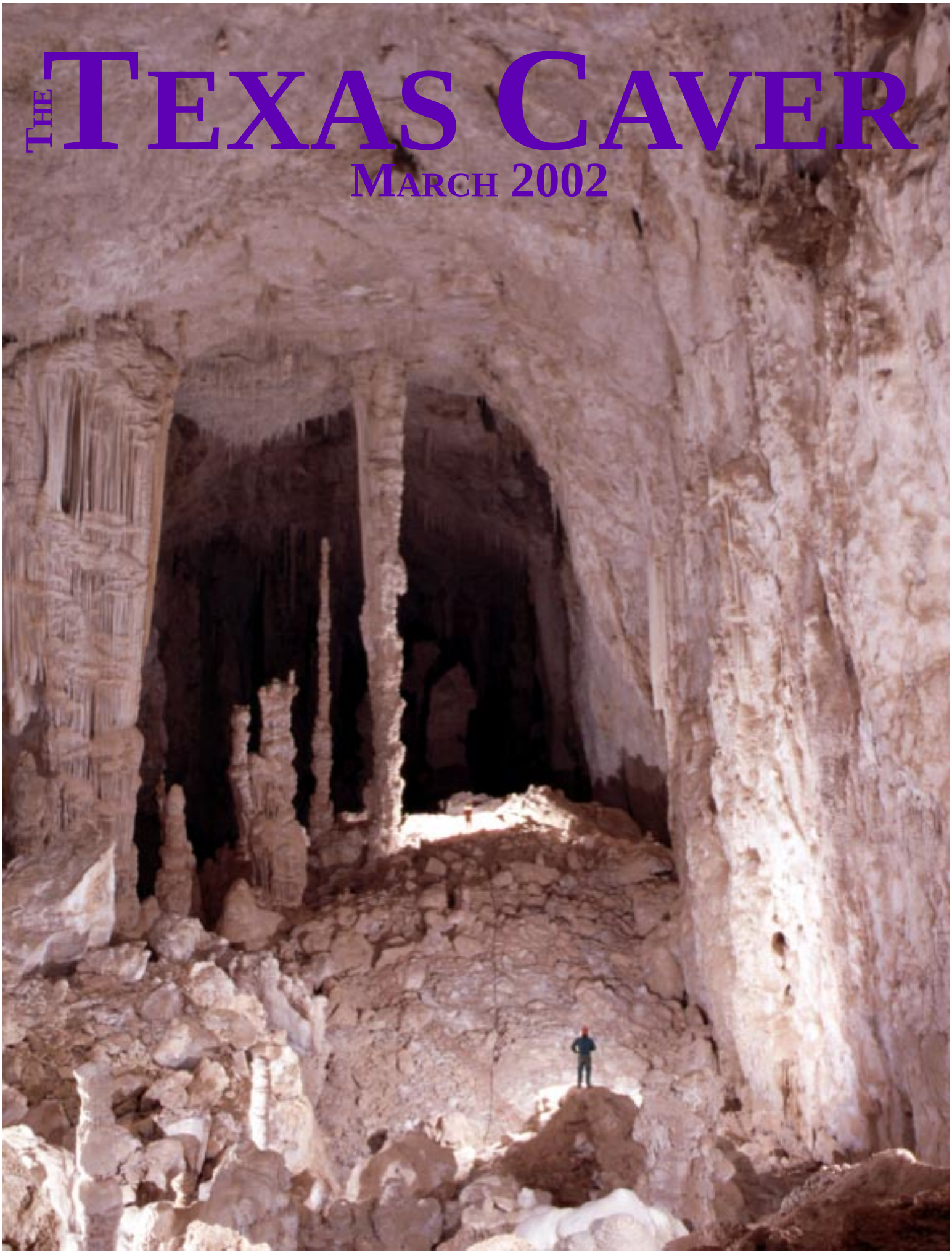
The Texas Caver

March 2002



THE TEXAS CAVER

March 2002
Volume 48 Number 3

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Photo Credits
(front cover)
Ed McCarthy took this photo in New Mexico's Ogle Cave. The 110-foot-tall Bicentennial Column is the second-tallest free-standing column in the world. Notice the size of the caver standing at the base of the formation. More of Ed's photos start on page 4.

For Assistance In
Cave Rescue
CALL
John Green
(361) 938-7080

February 2002 Issue Corrections

Page 1. Our apologies to Carl Kunath, whose wonderful Palmito cover shot wasn't done justice to by our color laser printer. We're going to calibrate it an extra time to teach it a lesson.
Page 3. 200 issues of *THE TEXAS CAVER* were mailed on February 6 to 186 subscribers, with a postage cost of $64.40.
Page 8. Jerry Fant has not changed his name to "Jery" as might have been implied by a photo caption. The other eight places his name appeared are correct. We hope.
Pages 20. While Carl Kunath and Ronnie Fieseler are correctly identified on the back cover, it's not a convention photo, but was taken in front of Bill Mixon's house. The only thing worse than screwing up a Kunath photo is doing so twice. *-mm-*

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EDITORIAL

Knee Deep in Guano

Mike Moore, *mrmike@centurytel.net*

It has taken years, but I finally understand caver volunteerism: **cavers aren't quitters**. No matter if someone is not doing the job volunteered for, or not doing it well, quitting must be worse, otherwise people could easily get out of their misery by unvolunteering.

It is great that caving organizations have volunteers, as the organizations could not exist without them. So please don't take anything I write here as even the slightest indication that you should not volunteer or should stop volunteering. Your help is very much needed. Still, there are some things that need to be said about volunteerism.

The first is that no, it is *not* okay to volunteer for a job and then regularly not do it or not do it well. And it *is* okay to complain if a volunteer is not doing what they volunteered to do or is not doing it well, particularly if there is someone else standing by, ready and willing to replace them.

Texas cavers are well known for their dislike of public dissension. The flame wars that plague other mailing lists are not anything compared to the minor squabbles once a month on CaveTex. "Don't disturb the caver karma," could be the theme for CaveTex.

The problem with not discussing issues in public is that it means they have to be handled behind closed doors, or, in what has been the case many times, the issues not getting resolved at all while Texas caving organizations suffer. That simply does not work. There has to be a way to have civilized discussions, based on *facts*, not emotions, among more than just TSA officers. It's definitely time for a TSA business e-mail list, similar to CaveTex, for discussing TSA business, including problems.

Volunteers are sometimes looked upon as an endangered species, which requires an almost impossible-to-get take permit to replace someone who is not doing anything. I've found that there are always people who are willing to volunteer, but they have to be asked individually. Put out a group welcome sign in a crowd of fifty busy cavers and you'll get fewer volunteers than if you were to individually ask the five people closest to you to help out.

This seems to be human nature. Volunteers often do not really want to volunteer, but will if they can be convinced that their help will make a difference in something important, and, that you personally want them to help. There is a catch: your task has to be something more important than what they are currently doing, as they are likely busy with something else. Cavers have lots of things going on in their lives, so for them to volunteer and do the job well may mean that something else will suffer.

At one time or another, everyone gets caught up with more to do than there is time to do it all, or has a problem with a lack of resources. And that happening occasionally to a volunteer is not a problem. It is only when no work gets done, or work is so shoddy that others are embarrassed by it, that there is a problem. One way of helping with that is to volunteer for things that are within your areas of expertise.

There is a solution if you are overwhelmed: it is okay to quit if you need to, particularly if you know someone else who can take your place. Also, a lot of what needs to be done does not require any permanent commitment, so volunteer when you have time.

Finally, please do volunteer. The TSA and other caving organizations in the state do want and need your help. It takes a lot of work to keep caving organizations going and it is a shared responsibility. Caving organizations are what you make of them, so how much time you can spend helping is directly proportional to how well they succeed.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Mar 9-10 Colorado Bend State Park.
Terry Holsinger, 512-443-4241,
trhli@sprynet.com

Mar 23-24 Hard Bargain Dig, Coryell County.
Keith Heuss, 512-482-6317, *kheuss@lcra.org*

Mar 23-24 Government Canyon Karst.
Marvin Miller, 830-885-5632,
mlmiller@gvtc.com

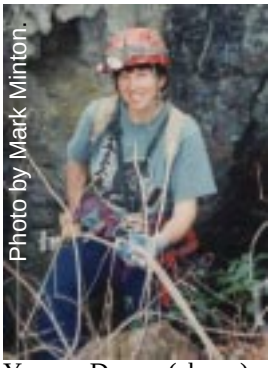
Mar 30-31 High Guads Restoration, NM.
Susan Herpin, *sherpin@zianet.com*

Apr 26-28 TSA Convention, Colorado Bend State Park. Annmarie Mikelski, 830-768-1615
caverannie@earthlink.net

Jun 24-28 NSS Convention, Maine.
See website: www.nss2002.org

A Photo Trip to the Guads
Deep, Black, and Awesome

By Yvonne Droms, *ydroms@RosettaStone.com*
Photos by Ed McCarthy, *caver18@attbi.com*



Yvonne Droms (above)



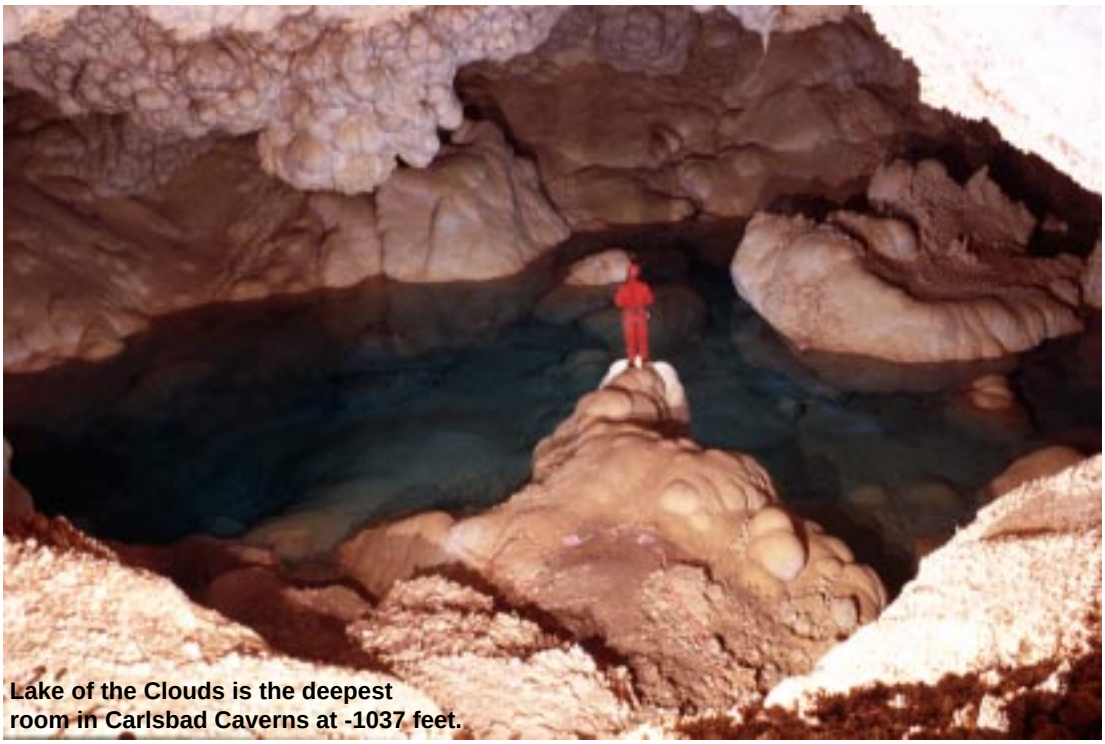
Ed McCarthy (right)

It was 7 a.m. on a cold January Friday when Ed McCarthy, Tom Malabad, Jeff Bray, and I piled into Eddie's Blazer and started on our 1700-mile journey from Wild, Wonderful, West Virginia to Wild, Wonderful, New Mexico. The long awaited photo expedition to the caves of the Guads had started, and we were psychologically ready for the 30 hours it would take to drive non-stop to Carlsbad Caverns. Less than two hours later, we were having our car and its accompanying nine-foot-long trailer towed into the Chevy dealership in Nitro WV. "Someone," who shall remain nameless but will never live it down, had filled the gas tank with diesel fuel instead of unleaded, and so four hours and way too much cash later, we were on our way again, not allowing this minor setback to dampen our enthusiasm. Guadalupe Mountains, here we come!

By 5 p.m. we were in Nashville TN, by 11:30 p.m. in Little Rock AR, and by 4 a.m. we crossed Dallas TX. The road was a bit blurrier by then, but we had four drivers and it wasn't too bad. The trailer tracked nicely, and we put our radar detector and CB radio to good use in order to avoid unpleasant encounters while shaving a bit of time off our trip. Amazing how fast you can go when the terrain is flat and the roads are straight! By midmorning of the second day, we were in Pecos TX, where we did our grocery shopping before we headed for the mountains. Around 1:30 p.m. on Saturday January 12, 2002, four bedraggled and bleary-eyed creatures stepped out of their four-wheeled prison into a gorgeous, sun-filled day at Carlsbad Caverns National Park.

We went to sign our volunteer agreements with Dale Pate and Stan Allison, then got settled into Research Hut Number 8, which has a wonderful view over the natural entrance of **Carlsbad Caverns**. We then drove around the loop road, which is part of the Guadalupe Trail, in order to take some pictures in Rattlesnake Canyon and Lechuguilla Canyon. With the sun getting low on the horizon, the light was just perfect. In the evening we got a visit from Michael Greene, who was staying in Hut Number 6 while doing some research in the Guads with a group of geologists from California. We accepted his invitation to go party with them next door while awaiting the arrival of the last member of our photo team, Frank Abbato, and his friend Shruti.

Sunday - We met Stan Allison, our guide, at 8:30 a.m. and signed the necessary papers at the Administration Building before marching over to the Visitor Center. We took the elevator down to the Lunch Room at -750 feet underground. It only takes one minute to go down! Guided by Stan, we left the main tourist area, entering into the Left Hand Tunnel, then strolling by the Hoodoo formations and through the Sherwood Forest. We did not take any pictures there since we had photographed all of that two years prior. We passed over a wooden bridge, then over a couple of bridges made of PVC-pipes, and one made of a metal grate. Eventually we got to the up-ladder then the down-ladder



Lake of the Clouds is the deepest room in Carlsbad Caverns at -1037 feet.

that brings you to the top of the first rope descending into Lake of the Clouds. That section of the cave is extremely decorated.

We rappelled down the first rope, which was more like a handline down a big slope, really, and then down a second, much longer one, eventually arriving at the Lake of the Clouds. That is the very bottom of Carlsbad Caverns, at a depth of -1037 feet. It's very warm there, and we were all way too hot in our coveralls, which are used for color in the photos. Big bulging formations hung above the lake, like mushrooming clouds. Soft-shaped mounds of orange flowstone surrounded the aqua-colored lake. I removed my boots and was allowed to walk on the flowstone in my wetsuit booties, to pose for the photo next to the lake. Somewhere in that area, there was a hole in the floor, about as narrow as a broomstick and at least five or six feet deep. It's a drip hole that carved its way down through layers of calcite rafts! Amazing.

After we were done with that big room, we ascended the first, 200-foot-long handline in order to take some pictures at the midlevel, then continued up the second, 50-foot handline and took more pictures near a little lake before heading back out to the Lunch Room. By the time we got there, the cave was closed and the tourist lights were off. Jeff and Tom used the pay phones 750 feet underground to call relatives and friends... what an unusual place for pay phones. After taking a quick tour of the Big Room on the commercial trail, we piled into the elevator to exit the cave. We wandered back to the Research Huts along the paved path that meanders amongst the sotols and yuccas in that strange but beautiful scenery that is typical of the Guads.



A very decorated wall in Carlsbad Caverns' Hall of the White Giant, on the way to the Guadalupe Room.

Monday - We got up pretty early, just as the sun was rising above the southeastern horizon. Carlsbad Caverns is so spectacular in the mornings and in the evenings! We loaded the car with all the photo and vertical gear and drove off, getting to the parking lot at Slaughter Canyon at 8 a.m., just as our guide-du-jour, Tom Bemis, was also pulling in. We introduced ourselves, signed papers, and got ready for the long hike up the canyon to **Ogle Cave**. The scenery, as usual, was gorgeous in that canyon, what with the play of sun rays and shadows, and the impressive rock faces towering over us. The first half of the hike was easy since the terrain along the streambed was relatively flat, but once we started climbing up the side of the canyon, it became much tougher. There was a trail for a while, but then it disappeared and you had to search for the next cairn in the rocky terrain.

We climbed up the very steep slope, trying to stay on the boulders to avoid the prickly vegetation. You have to watch what kind of a plant you're ready to grab before you use it as a handhold! We stopped at some point to check out the entrance to a horizontal tunnel that had been dug straight into the mountain back when Ogle was being mined for guano, in order to attempt to create a lower entrance to the cave. Simultaneously another tunnel was dug at the bottom of the cave, trying to join the outside one, so that once connected the new tunnel would make the steep climb to the entrance and the descent into the pit unnecessary. The would-be engineers were way off their mark, though, and the idea of a shortcut was eventually abandoned. We poked our heads into the tunnel, which only went in for about 35 feet. Hard work, though, in that kind of a terrain!

It took us an hour to get to the entrance of Ogle. At the top of the pit, Tom Bemis rigged the rope to an old, rusty winch that had been used for the mining. Cables hung into the cave from the opposite side of the pit, and you could also see remnants of an old ladder from the 1920s, made of twisted wire and wooden sticks. Those crazy early explorers! We dropped the pretty 180-foot pit and walked all the way to the end of the cave without stopping, so that Eddie could take in everything and then decide which areas to concentrate on. At the end of the cave there is a big hill that overlooks an immense chamber which is up to 100 feet wide and 130 feet tall in places, and just goes on and on forever! We all sat on the hill and ate an early lunch, then we got ready for the first picture, which involved an immensely long shot down the passage, all the way to a

110-foot-tall, 6-foot-slim column named the Bicentennial, way down there about 800 feet away in the distance.

Eddie gave us each a home-made "shooter" with huge, 50B flashbulbs and a pie tin as a reflector and sent us off down the passage to take up our positions. Some of us were so far away that instructions needed to be relayed down the line. The shot took a lot of work to set up, but eventually we got it done, and scattered here and there, checking out the remnants of the guano-mining activities from the late 1800s to the 1930s. There was a table covered with antique tins, kerosene lamps, and tools. Cables for a trolley system ran the length of the passage. There was a lot of damage to the formations, since the miners did not care if they harmed the cave. For example, since a gigantic column was in the path of the trolley, they just blasted it out of the way! It was sad to see the huge pieces lying about the floor.

We took various pictures in one area that was just full of monster formations, then started on our way out, knowing full well we wouldn't make it out in time to hike down the steep canyon side in daylight. That would make the hike doubly difficult, what with finding the unobtrusive cairns in the dark amongst all the prickly vegetation. By the time everyone had climbed out, it was twilight and we started down, scrambling over the rocks the best we could with our awkward loads. We got back to the cars and took leave of our guide. Back at the hut, Eddie, Tom and I prepared for the next day's photo shoot while Frank and Shruti drove all the way to El Paso to take Jeff to the airport, due to a family emergency. From then on, we were down to a four-person photo team.

Tuesday - We were going to the Guadalupe Room in Carlsbad Caverns today, so after meeting Tom Bemis and signing more papers, we started off towards the walk-in, natural entrance of the cave. What a gorgeous view! The path switches back and forth lazily, creating an interesting pattern when seen from above, like a snake slithering into the mouth of the cave. We hiked along the walkway for quite a long time before we got to the side passage leading to the Guadalupe Room. As soon as we were off the tourist trail, we started right in with crawling, chimneying, ducking, stoop-walking. I was not used to that in the Guads at all! This was the first time I've ever needed kneepads there, and I was glad to have them. It was like real caving, and so unusual from what I've seen in the past in that area. There were even some exposed sections where you could look down into some ominous rifts.

In one place, we climbed up a very pretty stainless steel ladder, slim and polished, and everyone marveled at it for a while. Eventually, after much passing through of gear to help each other out in the climbs and crawlways, we arrived at the Hall of the White Giant. I can just imagine how excited the original explorers must have been when they first entered into that big room, after all the tight misery preceding it! We took a picture of that huge, white formation, standing proud in the middle of the chamber on a hill. That room is the terminus of the guided, wild-tour trail. We passed by the White Giant and continued on towards the Guadalupe Room.

We ate lunch on the Balcony overlooking the immense Guadalupe Room, then proceeded to descend into it by clambering down a steep slope, weaving back and forth between big boulders. It was not hard to find our way, since we were on a flagged trail, but I can imagine that one could easily get turned around in immense chambers like that without the trail, especially when there are boulders everywhere and your light does not seem to reach very far. We got to an intersection where the flagging pointed left towards the main Guad Room, or right towards the Soda Straw Forest and the Canary Room. We opted to go check that area out, so off we went, to the right. Soon we got to a very pristine area of flowstone that could not be entered with boots on. It was Aquasocks territory. We all removed our boots and continued in our wetsuit booties to check out what wonders lay beyond that were worthy of photographing.

It was awesome! Cream-colored flowstone floors, with pure-white or caramel-tinted accents and decorations,



True to its name, Black Cave is filled with very dark formations. Yvonne Droms is on the flagged trail.

chubby stalagmites sprinkled with dainty aragonite bushes and tiny popcorn, and dense forests of delicate soda straws, some of them five feet long or more! Everywhere you looked, you could not help but marvel. We took some pictures in the Soda Straw Forest, and I took a few with my personal camera too. We did not go down into the Canary Room, as that would have entailed putting our boots back on on that side of the Aquasock area, and we didn't have much time left. So we headed back to the Guadalupe Room to take a few documentary shots with the large flashbulbs. We spent quite a bit of time scattering everyone about that huge chamber strewn with boulders, in order to set up the photograph. Then we headed back up to the Balcony and out through all the crawls and convoluted passages, landing on the tourist trail just as Paula and Dale Pate happened by.

Instead of climbing back out towards the natural entrance of Carlsbad Caverns, Tom Bemis suggested we continue on down towards the Big Room and take the elevator out. Tom turned on the commercial lights ahead of us, and it was magical to see all the lovely formations suddenly come alive by jumping out of the total darkness! We passed by the Iceberg Boulder, a monster rock well deserving of its name, then arrived at the Lunch Room, where we took the elevator back up. We watched the 750 feet of rock go by at a fast clip through the transparent wall of the elevator, occasionally catching glimpses of tantalizing voids. Back at the Research Hut, we spent the evening organizing for the next day's shoot, as well as packing our trailer for the early drive to the High Guads and the Lincoln National Forest.



The 300-foot drop in Deep Cave. Frank Abbato is standing near the bottom of a historic ladder from the 1920s, made with baling wire and sticks.

Wednesday - We drove off, bright and early, leaving the wonderful accommodations of the Research Huts behind. No more showers from now on... In Carlsbad we stopped to replenish our supplies, then drove to the Administration Site for the Lincoln National Forest in Queen NM. We picked up the key for the Look-Out Tower, as well as the volunteer agreements we needed to fill out every day. We arrived at the Tower at the top of the mountain around 10:30, got organized, and by noon we were ready to leave for our first day of caving in the High Guads. Over the Dragon's Teeth we drove, always a thrill, but no problem for Eddie's Blazer.

Once at the parking lot for **Black Cave**, we took out the step-log sheets we had been given so we could find our own way to the caves, since we would not have any guide in the National Forest. We started down the trail, counting steps. Each one of us ended up with a different count by the time we reached the next intersection, of course. However, we still found the cave easily. We unlocked the gate and stowed our backpacks inside the entrance. No sooner had we started down the passage than we spotted a ring-tailed cat peering at us from a hole in the wall. It was actually a very short passage, so the cat had two exits. It was so cute. It kept turning around in order to check out the escape route at the other end, and so we got a very good look at both his face and his long, striped tail.

Black Cave is very dark! Hence its name, I suppose. The cave just swallowed our light. The blackness comes from a layer of manganese dioxide that covers everything. There were nice trunk passages chock full of formations, some very orange, some mustard yellow. It was a striking cave, because of the richness of the colors, with the very dark background. Eddie took a few close-up shots, one of them of a double fried-egg formation on top of a stalagmite. Very interesting phenomenon, those fried eggs! Continuing on, we eventually found a rift bisecting the passage, with a little pool at the bottom, and took a photo from above it. In order to continue there, we would have had to get wet, so we declined since it was late already. We took a few more photos in Black cave, then headed out, hiking back to the car by moonlight.

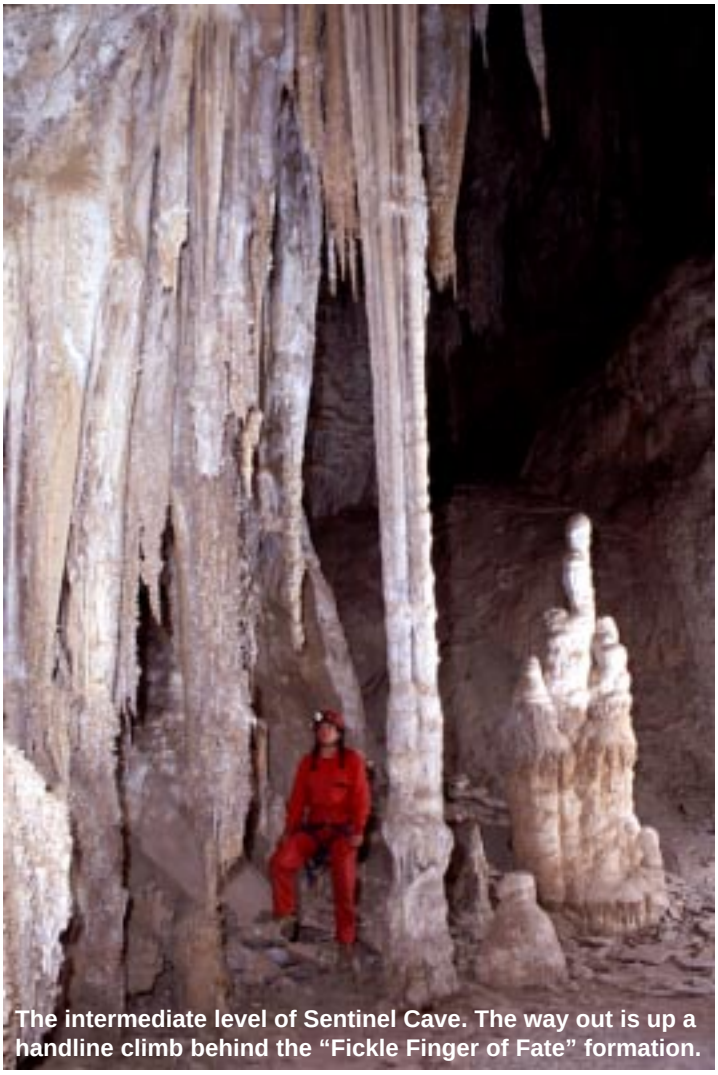
Back at the cabin, I climbed up to the top of the Look-Out Tower and admired the four horizons by moonlight. Canyons everywhere, mysterious and dark, lit up strangely by the moon. That night, the wind was pretty bad, and I was hoping my tent would not fly away with me in it and land in a bunch of lechuguillas. I slept fitfully, waking up often, but the rocks anchoring my tent corners down held fine, luckily.

Thursday - On the menu today was **Deep Cave**. It's in the National Park, not the Forest, but you access it from the Forest side, so it's quite a long drive of about four miles or so, at least one hour. We drove over the Dragon's Teeth again and eventually took Ushery Trail where the road deteriorated somewhat. It was passable enough usually but there were some very bad spots. Once at the trail head, we hiked for about 45 minutes to Deep Cave. We were carrying a 330-foot rope and a 150-foot rope besides all the photo and vertical gear, so everyone was loaded down. Tom Malabad rigged the entrance slope with the 150-foot rope, then disappeared down it carrying the long rope. We followed, bringing all the rest of the gear.

At the bottom of the slope, you could traverse over to a convenient platform, from where the big pit could be rigged easily. We all gathered there while Tom proceeded to rig the 300-foot drop. Since the pit actually starts from a lip that was about 50 feet below us, we used the excess from our first rope to rig the top of the drop. We tied our long rope to the end of it, thereby extending it by about 30 feet and ensuring that we would have enough rope at the bottom. It meant we had to pass a knot while descending the slope, but it was not a problem where the knot was located.

The pit, once you pass over the top lip, consists of a series of slopes, ledges and drops for about 200 feet until you go over one final lip, and from there you hang free for the last 100 feet or so. At some point along the way, the remnants of a ladder made of baling wire and sticks appears, and if you're not careful you can get tangled up in it. That ladder was used in the 1920s by Jim White and his crazy companions for their daring explorations. Can you imagine going down a 300-foot void on a ladder made of baling wire? It was a fun rappel down for me, on our safe, 11-mil rope. Since a few people were already at the bottom when I dropped into the room, I was able to get an idea of how big the chamber was. Huge! A flagged trail led away from the landing zone, then meandered on amongst formations and boulders. We followed it to check out the entire cave before deciding where to start with the photographs.

At the back of Deep Cave, the trail makes a loop through a very decorated area full of broomsticks. By the time we completed the loop and encountered the main trail again, we had seen so much beauty we didn't really know where to start! There were literally dozens of fried eggs all over, and beds of orange formations in the shape of trumpet coral,



The intermediate level of Sentinel Cave. The way out is up a handline climb behind the "Fickle Finger of Fate" formation.



A very decorated side chamber in Sentinel Cave.

stubby stalagmites spiked like hedgehogs, haystack formations 70 feet tall and as much as 60 feet in diameter, little grottos filled with shields and draperies, forests of broomsticks, you name it, this cave had it! We spent about eight hours photographing various areas in the cave then headed out. The last photo was a shot of the 300-foot pit, looking out towards the entrance. I frogged partway up the rope and hung next to the old ladder. I was so dwarfed by the dimensions of the room that it was good that I was wearing red coveralls, otherwise I would not have shown up in the picture at all.

While waiting for the others to come up the long drop, I got myself settled in a comfortable place and watched the starry sky through the entrance pit above, beyond the traverse. Cassiopeia was framed perfectly in the entrance; what a beautiful sight! Eventually everyone was out and we hiked back to the car, then drove for another hour to the Look-Out Tower. It was 11 p.m. before we got back. Along the way, we saw various large jack rabbits running across the road. They looked silly and clumsy somehow, with their long ears and long legs.

Friday - We left the Look-Out Tower and drove once again over the Dragon's Teeth to the trail head for Sentinel and Gunsight caves. We hiked in for a good hour using the step log, which goes something like this: "Walk at 166 degrees magnetic for 82 steps. The ridge narrows. Continue walking down the ridge top and through a saddle at 130 degrees magnetic for 415 steps." Landmarks like "you will be standing at an old fence" or "climb down to the small, 10-foot pinnacle at the base of this cliff" were very useful to put us back on course if we lost track of where we were. Once, though, we were told "Walk for 143 steps. There is a Midden Ring on your left." This kind of baffled us, since none of us knew what a midden ring was. By then we had lost track of where we were on the step log anyway, because the step length seemed to vary wildly and we had just gone through a series of step numbers with changes of direction, without any landmarks.

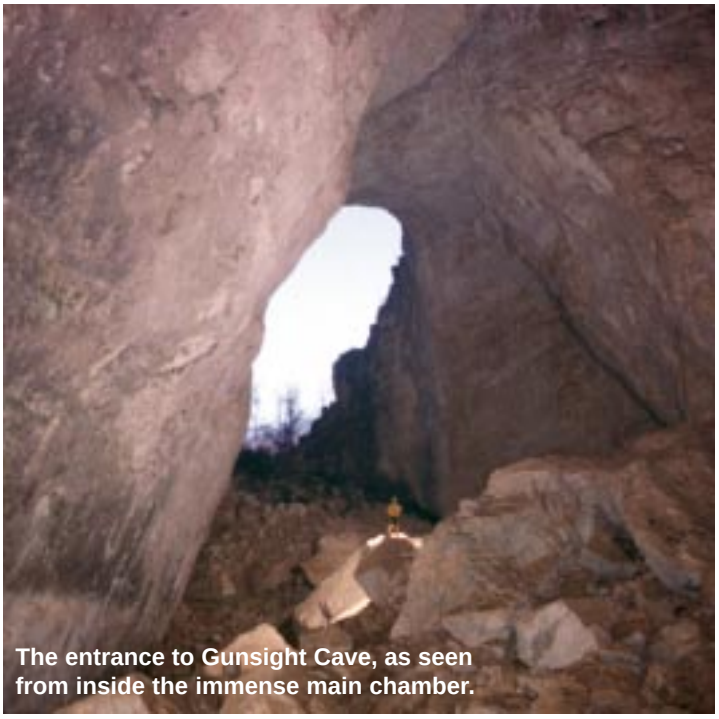
Luckily we eventually stumbled upon a huge ring of piled-up rocks, sitting there in the middle of nowhere. Who would have wanted to go through that much trouble in order to create this circle of rocks? In any case, we had no doubt that this was the mentioned midden ring and we were glad to find it, since we were a bit lost at that point. Onward we went, one of us counting steps, nose glued to the compass. The others were free to look around and admire the beautiful scenery, the deep canyons, the numerous openings in the cliff faces. After about an hour of this, we went over the edge of the cliff and started climbing down into the canyon, following the very steep trail that led to **Sentinel Cave**. It was just like rock climbing in places, and my big backpack really hampered me, because its outer frame kept hitting the rock, throwing me off balance.

It was pretty tough climbing down. Losing your footing or your grip was not an option: you'd either fall off the cliff or if you were lucky, you'd land in a bunch of cactus and stay pinned there. The wind gusts didn't help, but as it turned out it was nothing compared to what we ended up having to deal with later. We reached the entrance pit to Sentinel, and Tom rigged the 50-foot drop. The view into the cave was quite spectacular: there were two round openings on the back wall of the entrance that looked like two big eyes watching you. Hence the name of the cave, I suppose: Sentinel.

The cave was quite decorated and very pretty. We found some tall, pure-white columns which were themselves covered with tiers of smaller columns and formations. We squeezed through two columns and rappelled down a nuisance drop. Some of the rooms had false floors with occasional holes in them, which gave you glimpses of a passage below. They were probably pools a long time ago, because of the popcorn lining them. Eddie free-climbed up into a little side chamber full of shields, draperies, and bacon rind. He rigged a handline so we could bring up all the photo gear. We took photo after photo, spending four hours in Sentinel before exiting and derigging.

We climbed back up to the top of the cliff and continued on along the ridge towards **Gunsight Cave**, which was farther along on the same main trail. It took another 20 minutes or so to get to the point where you plunge off the side of the cliff again. You round a corner, and suddenly you're able to see the entrance. AMAZING! It takes your breath away, it is so spectacular! We roamed around the entrance chamber and its monstrous side passages looking at everything until it got dark since we could not really take photos until then. I took some pictures of the entrance with my personal camera just as the sun was setting, which

***Deep, Black, and Awesome** finishes on page 18*

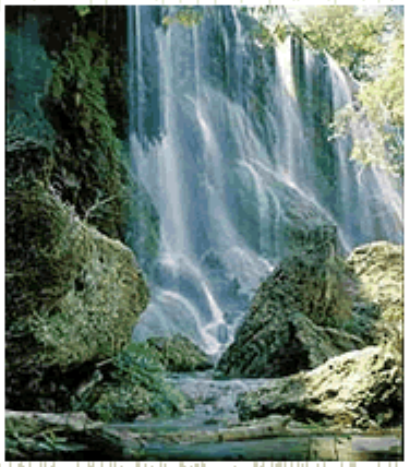


The entrance to Gunsight Cave, as seen from inside the immense main chamber.

COLORADO BEND STATE PARK

April 26-28 2002

TSA Spring Convention



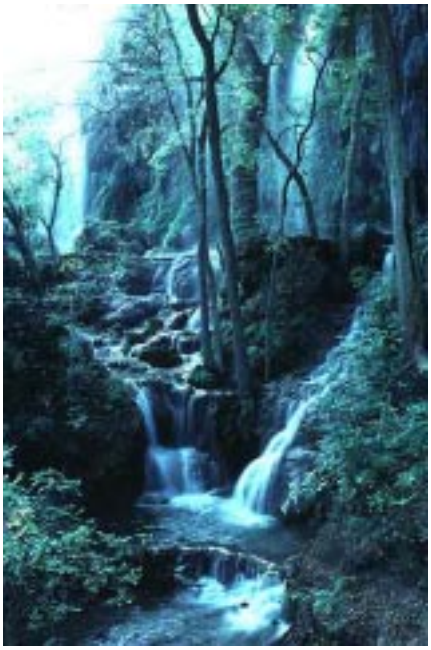
The annual TSA Convention is a chance to see your friends again, meet new and old cavers, and relax for a perfect weekend in the sun.

This year's TSA Convention is at the site of the former Lemon's Fish Camp, now known as Colorado Bend State Park. While you have the chance to visit Gorman Cave and other caves, there is also a great opportunity to hear interesting caving talks, participate in the photo and map salons, bid at the auction, and visit your favorite speleovendors. A BBQ dinner is included on Saturday night.

There are more than 150 caves known in the Park, and more are documented each year by the TSA Colorado Bend State Park Project. Sign-ups will be available during registration for visiting several of the more interesting areas of the Park. This February 2000 photo by Terry Holsinger shows Gorman Cave, with passages that vary so much that one moment you're walking in a stream, the next fighting thick mud and guano, and the next chimneying crevices.

A bat-friendly gate is well back in the cave, stopping unauthorized access and vandals. The stream coming out the large cave mouth empties directly into the Colorado River, just feet away, but it also means the cave floods when the Colorado comes out of its banks. The park offers different types of tours of Gorman Cave, walking and crawling, on Saturdays and Sundays.





This is one of the most beautiful places in Texas to have a TSA Convention and it's right in the center of the state.

There are miles of hiking trails in the 5300+ acre park, plus swimming, kayaking, and canoeing in the Colorado River. We have a private area of the park to ourselves and your family will love the other activities, such as mountain biking, bird watching, and fishing, while caver stuff is going on.

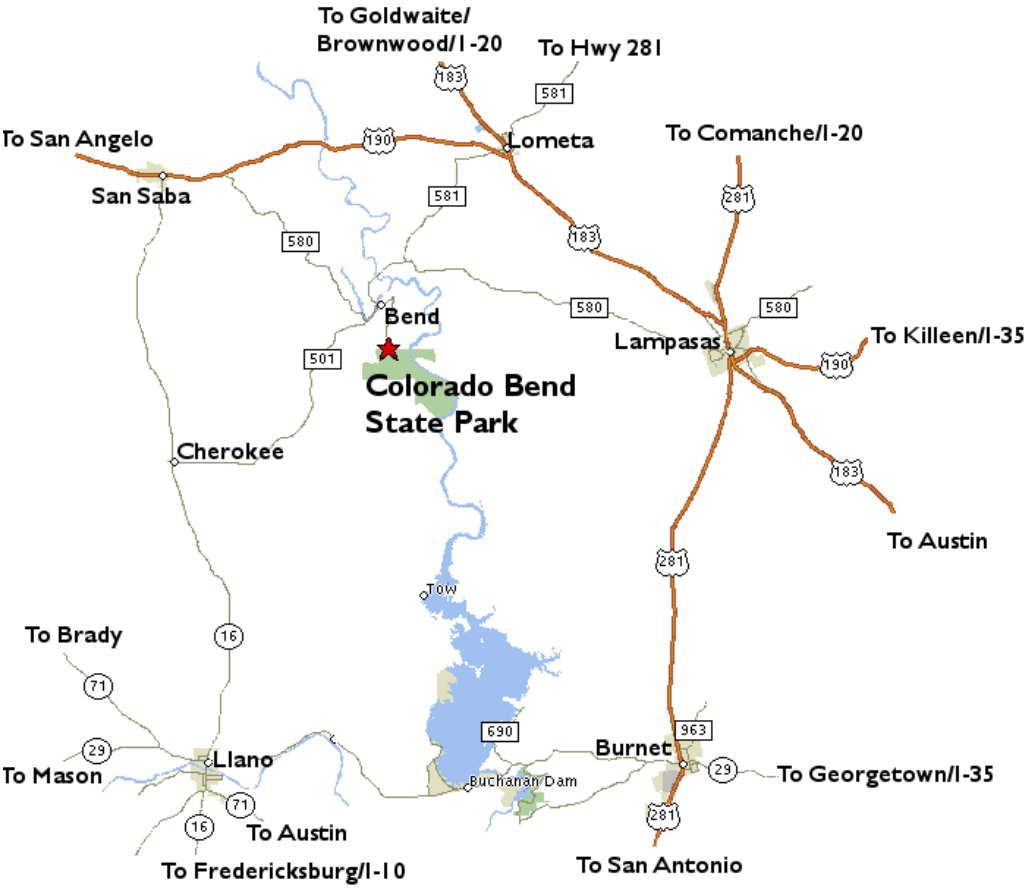
PHOTO SALON. If you would like to enter your slides or prints in the photo salon, contact **Kevin McGowan**, *kevin@kevinmcgowan.com*, (713) 665-3818. Complete photo salon rules and an entry form are available from Kevin.

MAP SALON. The map salon is being run by **Sean Vincent**, *svincent@fieldbusinc.com*. As usual, there are separate categories for caves under and over 100m, plus for computer maps and first-time cartographers. Map salon entry info is available from Sean.

A TSA meeting is scheduled for 10am on Sunday morning. Included will be voting on the amendments to the TSA Constitution as listed on pages 13-14 of this issue of *The Texas Caver*.

Directions to Bend TX

(Road log from Bend to CBSP on following page)



TSA members and all known Texas cavers will receive a pre-registration form in the mail in March.

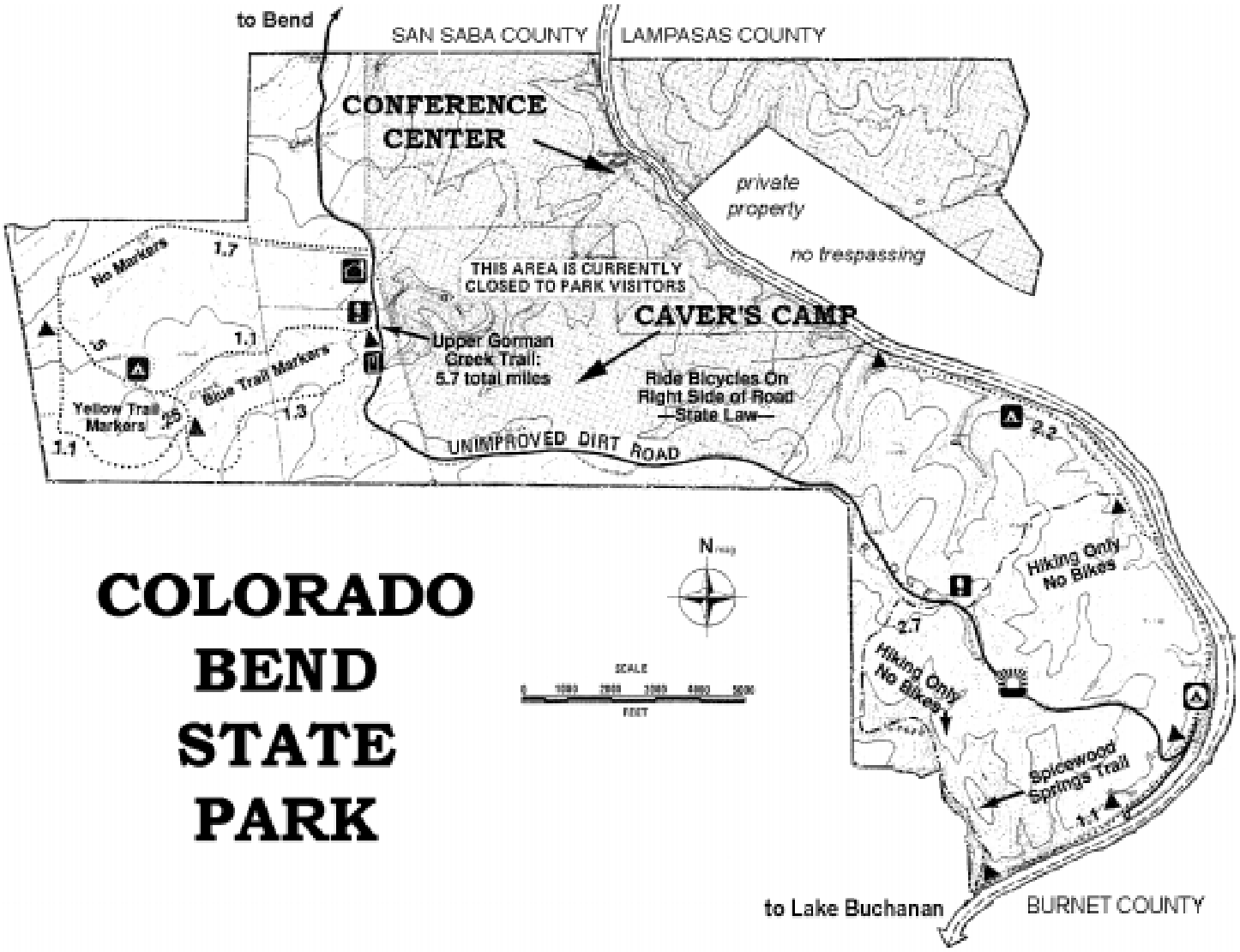
If you register early, rates are:

$15/person or $35/family

Pre-registration ends on April 15.

Registration at the door is $20/person or $45/family. This includes the dinner on Saturday night.

Directions to the TSA Campsite



Road Log from Bend to the TSA Cavers' Camp at Colorado Bend State Park

Miles	Total	Comments
0.0	0.0	Stop sign in Bend, junction of CR 442 and Hwy 580 at the Colorado River. Turn onto 442 South
0.1	0.1	Cattle guard.
0.2	0.3	Road turns right. Houses and driveways on the left.
0.2	0.5	Low water crossing.
0.3	0.8	Road to Barefoot Fishing Camp on the left. Keep right on CR 442.
1.4	2.2	Cattle guard.
0.8	3.0	Cattle guard. Road to Sulphur Springs Camp on the left (CR 446). Keep right on CR 442.
0.6	3.6	Cattle guard. Gate and entrance sign for Colorado Bend State Park.
0.4	4.0	Road to the left to Gorman Falls and CBSP Conference Center.
0.6	4.6	Park Superintendent's house and maintenance headquarters.
0.6	5.2	Gorman Creek. Low water crossing, usually dry.
0.5	5.7	Gravel road to the left to a gravel stockpile.
0.4	6.1	Faint ruts to the left, with "not open to public" sign. Turn here, follow the ruts to camp.

TSA Constitution
Proposed Amendments

By Jim Kennedy *jkennedy@batcon.org*
Texas Speleological Association Chairman

The following amendments to the TSA Constitution have been proposed and are to be voted on at the TSA Spring Convention in April.

[Changes are in red, comments are in blue.]

Proposed amendment: OFFICERS

Article IV: OFFICERS

A. The Executive Council consists of the Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer and the Chair of each Sstanding Ccommittee. Elected officers shall take office on the first day of the New Year.

1. The Chairman, when present, shall preside over all TSA meetings.

2. The Vice-Chairman is responsible for meeting and program arrangements and shall preside at TSA meeting is the absence of the Chairman.

3. The Secretary records the minutes of TSA meetings, handles organizational correspondence, completes NSS Internal Organization reports and other similar reports, and maintains the TSA records and archives. ~~and maintains a current list of members~~. [comment: this clears up some questions about who maintains the membership database]

4. The Treasurer keeps track of TSA assets by maintaining adequate financial records, including those for The TEXAS CAVER, and the TSA Store. The Treasurer prepares a budget for the fiscal year and presents financial reports at TSA meetings, and publishes a year-end financial statement in the official TSA publications~~, maintains the membership database, and insures the database is available electronically to the membership~~.

B. A vacancy in any elected office other than that of Chairman may be filled by the Executive Council by appointing any full member in good standing or by special election if so desired by the Executive Council.

C. The Vice-Chairman shall fill a vacancy in the office of Chairman.

D. Officers may be removed from their position by a three-quarters majority vote at any Member meeting.

Proposed amendment: COMMITTEES

[The following changes (in red) are proposed to clarify structure and responsibilities of the various TSA committees, and to correct some numbering problems in the current bylaws. Comments are in blue.]

Article V: COMMITTEES

A. Committees of the TSA are of two kinds: Standing and Temporary.

B. The Standing Committees are Publications, Membership, Conservation, and Safety. The TSA chairman appoints chairs of standing committees, ~~except Publications~~, whose terms shall be concurrent with those of TSA officers. Committee chairs may be removed at any TSA meeting by a ~~favorable~~ vote of three-fourths of the members or at any time at the discretion of the TSA Chair. Chairs of Standing Committees are members of the Executive Council and must be TSA members. All Standing Committee members must be TSA members (with exceptions in the Safety and Rescue Committee as noted below).

1. ~~C.~~ Publications Committee

a. The Publications Committee shall consist of the editors of TSA-sponsored publications, the TSA Treasurer, and other appointed members.

b. The ~~regular~~ publications of the TSA shall be The TEXAS CAVER (covers any material of interest to the members and to the Texas caving community), ~~The TSA Activities Newsletter (keeps members informed of future TSA, Project and other caving activities), and~~ the TSA Web Page (makes information about the TSA available to members, the caving community, and the general public), and any special publications such as election ballots and event flyers that may be needed. [comment: with the timeliness of The TEXAS CAVER, there is no longer a need for the TSA ACTIVITIES NEWSLETTER.]

~~c. The Texas Caver is the official publication of the TSA, and responsibility for this publication rests with the TSA membership. The membership shall elect the editor(s) at the fall TSA meeting annually, and the editor(s) shall assume editorship on the first day in January of the following year. All members must be TSA Members.~~ [comment: redundant]

c. The Publications Committee shall coordinate activities of the various publications to determine publication schedules, to solicit material for publication, to work with the Membership Committee to update the caver database, and to sell subscriptions, print and distribute the publications.

d. The TSA retains all rights to materials published in official TSA publications, except when previously published elsewhere or when such rights have been specifically granted to the individual author(s). The TSA is not responsible for opinions and facts expressed by individual authors where such are identified, but retains overall oversight of editorial content. These publications represent the TSA, and should maintain a high image. [comment: this formalizes current practices]

[The following two changes are to be voted on separately from the rest of the Committee amendment, which continue after these additions.]

[Proposed paragraph in addition to other changes:]

e The Database Manager maintains a TSA database of all known Texas cavers, with TSA members identified. Names of Texas cavers shall be collected from the TSA Convention and Project registrations, TCR registrations, grotto membership lists, the NSS, individual cavers, and other sources as needed. A "Texas caver" is defined as someone who currently participates, or participated in the past, in any regular caving-related activities in Texas. Cavers who are currently active in Texas caving activities shall be flagged as active in the database. The Database Manager is appointed by the TSA chairman.

[Proposed alternate wording for the last sentence:]

The Database Manager is nominated by the chairman and affirmed by a 3/4 vote of the Executive Council. The Database Manager must hold no other elected or appointed position.

2. Membership Committee

a. The Membership Committee shall consist of the Database Manager, the TSA Secretary, the TSA Treasurer, a representative of the Publications Committee, and other appointed members.

~~b. All members must be TSA members.~~ [comment: redundant]

b. ~~c.~~ The committee will develop data to be made available to TSA officers, committees, member organizations, affiliated organizations, and members for conducting caving business. The committee insures the membership database is published annually ~~at least every four years,~~ and is not made available to the general public.

c. ~~d.~~ The Membership Committee will maintain an aggressive program within the various grottos, Projects, and other Texas caving organizations to encourage joining the TSA ~~and to subscribe to its publications~~.

3. Conservation Committee

a. The Conservation Committee shall consist of a representative from the various projects, the Texas Speleological Survey, any of the Affiliated Organizations, and other interested ~~appointed~~ members.

~~b. The Chair and the majority of the Conservation Committee must be TSA members.~~ [comment: redundant]

b. ~~c.~~ The purpose of the committee is to ~~coordinate gathering and maintaining Texas cave information, to~~ identify conservation problems, ~~to~~ initiate remedies, and ~~to~~ promote education of cavers and the general public concerning cave conservation.

4. Safety and Rescue Committee

a. The Safety Committee shall consist of interested and qualified TSA members~~, interested parties,~~ and representatives of governmental emergency agencies~~, as appointed~~.

~~b. The Chair and the majority of the Safety committee must be TSA members.~~ [comment: redundant]

b. ~~c.~~ The committee's purpose is to maintain a list of available cave rescue equipment and ~~its~~ locations, to coordinate with ~~state and~~ local, state, and federal emergency response agencies and the National Cave Rescue Comission, to promote education and training for cave rescue situations, and to produce cave safety and cave rescue related articles for inclusion in TSA publications.

C. ~~D.~~ Temporary committees are created and dissolved by the TSA Chairman as required for purposes and tenures to be specified at the time of appointment. ~~Only the~~ The TSA Chairman appoints the temporary committee Chair, whom then designates the remaining members of that~~. The temporary committee Chair shall be responsible for appointing members to their~~ committee. [comment: cleans up sloppy wording]

Proposed amendment: ELECTIONS

[Every year our elections process has been improving, and much credit should be given to those involved. However, the current constitution is quite vague and even a little contradictory about the elections process. This is an attempt to provide some guidelines and responsibilities in order to avoid future problems.]

Article VI: TERMS AND ELECTIONS

A. The term for membership, subscriptions, and any other TSA business not specified otherwise in the Constitution or Bylaws, shall be twelve months.

B. There are two types of elections: regular (the annual election of Officers) and special.

1. Regular elections are to be held each year at or near the fall meeting by mail-in secret ballot or other similar process to elect officers~~. and to vote on initiatives~~.

a. The TSA Chair shall appoint an Elections Committee chair, who may chose other committee members, to present a slate of candidates to the Membership, prepare and distribute ballots, and tabulate and announce election results.

b. The temporary Elections Committee is dissolved when the new officers take office. In the event of the loss of all four officers, the previous Election Committee chair shall assume charge of the TSA while a new slate of officers is properly nominated and elected (see Special Elections below).

c. Officer nominations may be made by any TSA member. Provisions will be made on ballots for write-in candidates. If a TSA member is nominated for more than one office, that candidate must choose to run for only one of the offices. All nominations must be announced in official TSA publications as least 30 days before ballots are due.

d. Ballots must be counted by at least four TSA members in good standing. Results will be announced in official TSA publications within 10 working days of the election deadline.

e. In the event of a tie, the candidates with equal votes may choose between themselves who will remain in office and who will concede. If no agreement can be reached, a special election will be held to resolve the tie, until one candidate has a majority of the votes.

f. Additional initiatives, such as Bylaw amendments, can also be attached to a Regular Election, if such are announced in official TSA publications at least 30 days in advance. [comment: this formalizes the election procedure more and should clear up some lingering confusion]

2. Special elections can be called at any time by the TSA Chairman, or by the Membership by a petition of at least 10% of the current TSA members. A Special Election Chair is designated by the TSA Chair for this purpose. Special elections must be announced by publishing in the official TSA publications at least 30 days in advance. Special elections may be to address the special situations outlined above, or any other need perceived by the Membership. [comment: just a little more clarity]

~~Ballot initiatives may include proposed amendments to the Constitution and Bylaws. Special elections may be called at any time by the TSA Chairman or by petition as specified in the Bylaws in order to fill vacant officer positions or to vote on proposed amendments to the Constitution or Bylaws.~~

~~1. Officer terms are effective for a year beginning on the first day of the New Year. Election results are announced in each TSA regular publication immediately after results become available.~~ [comment: redundant (in Article IV: Officers)]

Proposed amendment: LAND FUND

Article VII: LAND FUND

A. One dollar from every member registering at official TSA ~~meeting~~ Project, TSA Spring Convention, and Texas Cavers Reunion shall be placed in the Land Fund and held separate by the treasurer. [comment: clarifies "meeting"]

Texas Speleological Association

Winter Business Meeting, January 6, 2002, Del Rio, Texas

Attendees:
Jim "Crash" Kennedy, Chairman; Annmarie Mikelski, Vice Chairman
Christi Bennett, Treasurer; Joe S. Ranzau, Secretary;
Alan Langford*, Alex Gomez*, Jacqui Bills, Ron Ralph, David Custer
* = Non member

Call to Order 9:30 a.m. Chairman called the meeting to order, introduced the new officers, and invited everyone to introduce themselves.

Chair: The TSA has been improving over the past several years and this year will be no exception. The membership has a lot of enthusiasm. We need to stay on our toes and keep pushing to improve. Having *The Texas Caver* back in production is a major step as it is the primary point of contact of the TSA, and a benefit for our members. This year will have its challenges, but the entire Executive Council and committee chairmen are committed to working hard to improve everything.

Secretary: Minutes from October 2001 meeting approved with emphasis to figure out who is on the new land fund committee. Motion by Bills - Seconded by Ralph - unanimously approved.

Treasurer: No new information from the Secretary's Report. We are still waiting on the banking information from the past officers. Our financial situation should be improved from TCR 2001. Chair asks that when we do get the financial info, it be circulated to the officers first and then posted to the website.

Discussion was held about making sure all TSA meeting minutes and financial statements are open and made available on the website to all members. Ralph suggested making a quarterly update of finances in *The Texas Caver.* A year-end financial statement should also be published in *The Texas Caver.*

Ralph brought up auditing the TSA financial books. Discussion was held on an outside audit and the possibility of a constitutional amendment to perform an internal end-of-year audit.

Grotto Reports: Discussion was held for new members and visitors explaining the hierarchy of caving clubs starting with the NSS through Grottos.

Bexar: The grotto has been running in the black for several years. Meetings normally bring in about 35 people with a membership base of about 150. Bexar has taken the step to appoint a TSA representative to attend the business meetings. It has also been approved if needed that the grotto will assist with gas money to meetings. The grotto is steward for Bracken Bat Cave and for Robber Barons Cave. Sponsored trips go to Carlsbad Caverns for cave restoration twice a year, and have gone to Terlingua Sink. Government Canyon, Honey Creek, and Hill Country State Natural Area projects are based out of Bexar. Officer elections will be held this month.

University of Texas Speleological Society: This is one of the bigger grottos in the state, with routinely between 70-80 people per meeting with 200+ on the membership list. Lots of small projects and caving trips are enjoyed regularly. There is an active training program because of the abundance of new members coming to the Austin area. The membership is heavily involved in TSA and other projects throughout Texas and Mexico. Marcus Gary, Chairperson; Justin Shaw, Vice Chair; Dale Barnard & Denise Prendergast, Secretary/Treasurer.

Permian Basin Speleological Society: The *Hole News* is going strong. It is published on-line as well as in print. The group sponsors regular trips and rock hauling projects at Carlsbad. The group acts as steward for Amazing Maze and O-9 Well. They participated in installing the new culvert in Lechuguilla. The grotto did a wonderful job hosting the 2001 Spring Convention at Caverns of Sonora.

Project Reports: A discussion was held on the nature of projects as to what they do, and their value.

Powell's Cave: This project run by Terry Holsinger is winding down. The cave surveying is in the mop-up stage fixing minor errors. The next several trips will be small groups selected to fix specific errors in the surveying or other data that is needed.

Honey Creek Cave: This project is run by Kurt Menking of Bexar Grotto. Last Spring a large 20th-anniversary trip was held to fix surveying errors and push/survey the cave to increase the length. The trips are fairly easy to setup when water levels permit.

Colorado Bend State Park: This project has monthly trips on the second Saturday of the month except during the hot summer months. There are 180+ caves and more keep being discovered. The project assists the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) in resource assessment through activities such as surveying, GPS locating, and even assessing the caves for guided wild tours that the park conducts. The project routinely brings in large 60+ person crowds. Camping is primitive but a good time is had by all and it is open to everyone. The project has proven a good training ground for new cavers.

Government Canyon: This project is headed by Marvin Miller. Trips are the first weekend of the month September – June. The project assists TPWD with resource inventory. This past trip a new cave was discovered. The project is in a mop-up from its earlier days preparing for the park to open in a year or so. The park contains several large caves. Most trips seem to be very small with only a handful of people.

Kimble County: This project is led by Jim Kennedy. It has expanded from one to several ranches in the area. A couple dozen caves and karst features have been documented. The caves can form in the Segovia layer which is gypsum, so the caves vary from the usual limestone caves in Texas. The turnout is normally under a dozen with camping mostly provided in bunkhouses.

Uvalde County: This project is led by Jim Kennedy. It started on one ranch and has expanded to multiple ranches via word of mouth from land owners. The project has produced dozens of new documented caves and improved the documentation on existing caves. Working with landowners is proving very helpful. Side note: TSS is working on a *Caves of the Indian Creek Valley* bulletin.

Hays County: This project is coordinated by Mike Moore. It is mostly a small core group of cavers that enjoy the trips. Emphasis is on mopping up old cave reports to improve the data for the TSS *Caves of Hays County* bulletin. The group is active several weekends a month and does weekday caving.

Bustamante: The project is coordinated by Rune Burnett and Orion Knox. This is the only TSA international and conservation project. The trip is normally held once a year on Labor Day weekend. The project started by improving access to the cave and improving the show cave portion. It is evolving into a graffiti cleanup. This is a great cave for a first time Mexico trip and the town offers a safe and fun experience.

Hill Country State Natural Area: This project is headed by David Custer. The project is starting again by redeveloping a relationship with the TPWD. Three trips have been conducted so far. The project is focusing on cleaning up the TSS files by completely exploring/surveying known caves and locating new ones. Currently the park has 34 known caves.

David Custer has requested that HCSNA become a TSA sponsored project. Discussion was held on the purpose of becoming an official TSA project. A motion was made by Ranzau - seconded by Ralph - for the board to accept HCSNA as an official project. Board passed the motion unanimously.

Kickapoo Caverns State Park: Allan Cobb is reviving this project. One trip was held last year to close the old guano mining shaft to Stewart (Green) Bat Cave. The project is assisting TPWD with resource inventory. A motion was made by Kennedy - seconded by Mikelski - for the board to accept KCSP as an official project. Board passed the motion unanimously.

Side note: TPWD is reconsidering the access situation to Devil's Sinkhole. The idea being tossed around currently is a permit system with a processing fee attached (and a purpose). Kennedy will write a letter to TPWD on behalf of TSA suggesting a specific permit system as the best course of action.

Committee Reports: Descriptions of all standing committees were read from the Constitution, and extensive discussion was held on each.

Conservation: Kate Walker was appointed chairman and has three goals for the committee. 1. Track and share with cavers relevant conservation news pertaining to caves. 2. Increase awareness of cave related conservation issues through a monthly article in the *The Texas Caver* 3. Catalog endangered cave species throughout the state and provide the data to TSS

Safety: A discussion was held on the duties of the position as outlined in our constitution. David Custer was appointed chairman and Jacqui Bills is on the committee.

Membership: Christi Bennett and Joe Ranzau were appointed as co-chairs with Annmarie Mikelski as the Publications committee representative. The committee will be notifying members as their membership year expires, and encouraging cavers across the state to join our ranks through an aggressive campaign.

Publications: A motion was made by Kennedy - seconded by Mikelski - to change the *Activities Newsletter* to a *Special Publications* section under the Publication committee in the constitution. The meeting voted unanimously to present the amendment to the membership in the *The Texas Caver* and vote on it at the Spring Convention.

The committee hierarchy was discussed. A motion was made by Bennett – seconded by Kennedy - to relieve Becky Jones of the burden of finishing the two remaining issue of *The Texas Caver* from 2001, as well as the remaining content not yet published. The vote passed unanimously.

A motion was made by Kennedy – seconded by Custer - for the Publications committee to hand the materials from Becky Jones to Mike Moore, to print in the old black and white style, the combination of all the remaining 2001 material into one additional issue to be published this year. The vote passed unanimously. The issue will be distributed only to members whose dues were paid up in 2001 (and paid for with that 2001 budget money).

Discussion was held on the vagueness of the constitution concerning the chairman of the committee. A motion was made by Ranzau - seconded by Kennedy - to clarify the hierarchy of the committee. The chairman would be appointed by a ¾ vote of the TSA Officers. The chairman would then appoint all committee members including the Webmaster, *The Texas Caver* editor and others. The Treasurer, Webmaster and *The Texas Caver* editor positions are on the committee by default. This modifies article V section C paragraph A & B of the constitution. The meeting voted unanimously to present the amendment to the membership in *The Texas Caver* and vote on it at the Spring Convention.

Mike Moore is in charge of recovering the monies from our expired bulk mail account to be returned to the Treasurer. *[Editor's Note: He subsequently declined, as it requires the secretary/treasurer to write a letter removing the former editor's name from the expired mail permit]*

Our exchange publication policy was discussed. The board decided the current policy of exchanges is fine and will not be modified. We will continue to send the *The Texas Caver* to those clubs who send us their newsletter.

Elections: The board would like to thank Sean Vincent for his hard work on 2002 elections, and, if willing, would like Sean to continue in the position with further board input to improve the process. If Sean is not willing to continue Tom Brown will be affirmed as chairman. If Sean chooses to continue the board would like Tom Brown as a member.

Constitution Committee: Joe Ranzau will continue as chairman, and is currently working on revising the constitution.

Land Acquisition: A motion was made by Kennedy – seconded by Ranzau - to amend collecting one dollar from every participant at a TSA "meeting" to read "project" in the constitution. The meeting voted unanimously to present the amendment to the membership in the *The Texas Caver* and vote on it at the Spring Convention.

Discussion was held to clarify the composition of the committee. Ranzau was appointed to call Terry Holsinger to clarify the committee members, and then hold an election as outlined in the constitution for the Land fund if necessary. By direction of Chairman Kennedy, the 2002 Election Chairman shall conduct an electronic/phone voting system to appoint a trustee by March, if needed.

Convention: The board suggested John Knox Ranch in Wimberley, Texas, as the location for the 2002 Spring Convention, which will be held either on April 26-28 or 19-21. No grotto has come forward to host the convention and the committee is still accepting offers. They will also begin to plan places and dates for conventions three years in advance to provide an even higher quality of convention, and to make it easier for members to plan on attending. **[Editor's Note: the 2002 Spring Convention will be held on April 26-28 at Colorado Bend State Park.]**

Bookstore: The board moved that McNatt can produce and order new or existing materials for the book store with our consent. Tom Brown's trailer needs to be picked up and brought to Austin and have some maintenance performed and be converted to a weather proof state.

Activities Newsletter: The newsletter was transformed to a *Special Publications* section for printing various items such as election ballots.

25th T.C.R. Recognition: Kennedy instructed Ranzau to contact past chairman of the committee Lee J. Graves to see if he has a status report and is still interested in serving.

New Business:

Budget: Bennett will prepare a budget when she takes over the financial records. It was asked she present the budget before the Spring Convention if possible.

Registrations: The Membership committee will continue to improve the availability of TSA membership registration opportunities and guarantee that if a person does join or renew their membership it will be handled correctly and promptly.

Dues: Kennedy would like to see the membership dues lowered ideally seven dollars before the end of the year. Bennett and Ranzau express hesitation at such an extensive amount at this point. The entire board agreed to wait until we had a better handle on our financial situation and our budget.

Additional Meetings: The board agreed to have a fourth business meeting, preferably in May, at a TSA project if possible.

TSA Records and Surplus Storage: Extensive discussion was held on our current storage situation. Our business records are currently stored at Bill Mixon's house in Austin. The board asked Kennedy to write a request to the TSS board to consider allowing TSA to store the 18,000 back issues of *The Texas Caver* in their facilities.

The next Business meeting will be at 10 a.m. on Sunday of the Spring Convention.

Meeting adjourned at 1:32 p.m.
Respectfully submitted, Joe S. Ranzau, Secretary

TSA Bookstore Status

Logan McNatt, January 3, 2002

Monies:
$702.00 - Cash
$85.00 – Coins
$787.00 = Total

Checks:
$127.00 – Inner Mountain Outfitters for 100 Oztotl Stickers
$36.00 – Sean Vincent for 3 t-shirts
$9.00 – Emily K. Walker for 3 *The Texas Caver* (Nov 2001)
$172.00 – Total for three checks given to Kennedy to give to Bennett

Credits owed:
$100.00 From Edwards Aquifer Authority for Boxed Set of *The Texas Caver* purchased by Geary Schindel at TCR on October 19, 2001.

Debits:
± $700.00 to Squire Lewis's daughter for sale of 50 *Chronicles of the Old Reading Grotto* at $2.00 for the TSA and $14.00 to the daughter for a price of $16.00 each.

Stock:
$6,208.50 – ± 18,038 *The Texas Caver* at assorted prices (6,416 at Logan McNatt's house and 11,622 at Bill Mixon's basement)
$1,680.00 – 140 T-shirts at $12.00 each
±$375.00 – ±75 Texas Bat stickers at $5.00 each
±$3,000.00 – ±1,200 Oztotl stickers at $2.50 each
±$250.00 – For assorted other stickers and patches
±$11,513.50 – Approximate total stock value

Cave Rescue
Call Down List

By Don Broussard ***Don.Broussard@att.net***

On January 16, 2002, John Green came to the University of Texas Grotto meeting and spoke about cave rescue in Texas. John is the South Central Region Director of the National Cave Rescue Commission. He is also an Austin Fireman with special training such as confined space and high angle rescue. John's job is to know how to get folks out of bad situations.

John began with an update on an earlier organization that last called itself the Texas Caver Rescue. The organization was based on a call down list at the Kreidler Funeral Service located in McAllen, Texas. Their phone number has been published on stickers, in the Texas Caver and in earlier Texas Cavers' Reunion Members' Manuals. The Kreidler Funeral Service is called sporadically on a trial basis, not a real emergency, to see if it is still there. Each time in the last two years John called it, the person answering has not known why a caver would call the funeral service and has not known whom else to even ask. Texas Caver Rescue no longer exists as it had been known.

John continued to mention an excellent variety of topics. For background, Texas is governed county by county. Each Judge, and hence each sheriff, in each county in Texas is in control. They do not recognize any state agency to be more official than themselves. Especially when injuries are involved, 911 is a valid call to make. Immediately the local sheriff becomes responsible, not you.

At any cave problem, there is no guarantee of getting a skilled team of cavers underground when the sheriff's office arrives first. I consider it a good idea to have one of the members of any team of cavers responding to a call be skillful in hostage negotiations and public relations. The situation is likely to be smoother if the sheriff believes it was his own idea to ask the cavers to help.

After carefully listening to everything John said and did not say, my impression is that each caver who considers herself/himself a possible contact in case of an emergency needs to possess a list of friends and associates they can call on. No official organization is presently available, and no formal call down list exists. I provide a list of my personal resources and why I have them.

1) The most knowledgeable CAVER of the area.

Bill Stephens knows the gypsum panhandle of Texas.

Mary Kay Manning, Park Ranger at Big Bend National Park, knows more than any other ranger about the caves there.

Walter Feaster or Bill Bentley are good for far west Texas.

Deirdre Hisler is the Park Superintendent for Government Canyon State Natural Area.

Mike Burrell knows Kendall county.

Cory Evans is the Park Superintendent at Colorado Bend State Park.

Terry Holsinger runs the Powells Project.

George Veni and Linda Palit know about caves around San Antonio.

Brian Vauter is the contact for Natural Bridge Caverns in Comal county.

William Russell knows about Travis, Hays and Williamson counties.

Butch Fralia is the Texas Speleological Survey database manager.

Dale Pate is the leading source for Carlsbad Caverns National Park.

Peter Sprouse knows the Purification area north of Cd. Victoria, Mexico.

Nancy Pistol and Matt Oliphant know the most about Cueva Cheve in Oaxaca.

Bill Steele and Mark Minton know the Huautla area in Oaxaca.

John Green knows a lot about cave rescue anywhere.

Where do YOU cave? The January 2002 issue of *The Texas Caver* is an excellent source of telephone numbers for many of my caving areas.

2) Logistical support. Is a reliable 4x4 pickup needed to get there?

Will a shovel, hydraulic jack, food, water or shelter be useful?

3) National Cave Rescue Commission training. Who has taken the NCRC course and at which of the 4 levels?

4) Medical training - EMA, EMT, PMT, MD. Who can you call if someone is hurt?

5) Backboard. A Stokes litter might be needed.

6) Small or skinny cavers. Sometimes a person in trouble is stuck.

7) Vertical competence. Which vertical cavers have extra rope and pulleys? #3 also covers this topic.

8) Communications. Cell phones can be valuable. No quarters are needed right then, even though the cell phone statement will eventually have to be paid. Two-way radios or military handsets and a kilometer or two of wire for underground communications may be useful.

Most readers of the Texas Caver will never need this expertise. Some of us, however, have. I personally was involved with assisting in the removal of three friends' bodies from caves. I have been at the site of so many injuries and accidents inside a cave where assistance was needed that I cannot remember all of them. There are hundreds of other caving accidents in which I read or heard about. Admittedly, 30+ years is longer than most of the readership will stay in caving. I suggest everyone give up caving immediately. You are safer being a couch potato.



Deep, Black, and Awesome *continued from page 9*
projected a special orangey-red glow deep into the cave entrance.

Gunsight did not have much to offer besides its gigantic size. A few large hay stacks decorated it, but mainly it just consisted of piles of breakdown everywhere, which made it hard to walk around in. We took a few pictures for the sake of documentation, then left the cave around 6:30 p.m. By then the wind had drastically intensified, and that made our return hike quite miserable. It was dark, and we had to pay attention to the landmarks so we could find our long way back. The wind was very cold, sustained at 30 m.p.h. with gusts of up to 60 m.p.h. that were constantly blowing us off the trail. With my big frame pack that acted like a sail in the wind, I was meandering in the cacti like a drunk, unable to keep on course on the trail.

Along the way we retrieved the stashed ropes from Sentinel, then plodded on, uphill the whole way on that rough karst covered with prickly vegetation. We fought the wind every step of the way. How glad we were when we finally saw the car. We got back to the Look-Out Tower just before 9 p.m., quite tired. When I stepped into my tent, I found everything covered with a layer of fine, orange dust that the fierce wind had blown into the tent. I didn't really care and was asleep as soon as my head touched my pillow.

Saturday - We spent the morning cutting up downed trees to replenish the Look-Out Tower's reserve of firewood. We stacked it all up neatly inside the building and against an outside wall. Today was our last day and so we hiked down the canyon to look at the entrance of **Cottonwood Cave**, then returned to clean up the building and pack the trailer. It was a gorgeous day, no trace of the terrible winds from the previous day, and it was hard to leave this beautiful scenery and head back to winter on the East Coast. We left the Look-Out Tower by mid-afternoon and drove down to the Administration Building to drop off the keys and the filled-out volunteer agreements. Then we pointed the Blazer east and started on our long journey back.

That night, we caught a few hours of sleep in a motel somewhere along the way in Texas. The following morning, Sunday, we drove on non-stop all day and all night. Just to remind us that it was truly winter in our neck of the woods, we encountered bad weather as soon as we approached the West Virginia border. Just my luck, it was my turn at the wheel, and since it was about three in the morning, everyone else was fast asleep. Rain and temperatures just below freezing made for a bad combination and a stressful drive. Soon the rain changed over to snow, just to make matters even more interesting while pulling a trailer.

I was glad when Tom took over the wheel, and happily fell asleep while he drove over a few more mountain ranges, all the way back to the WVACS fieldstation near Lewisburg WV where we had started eleven days ago. My car was patiently waiting for me there, blanketed with a thick layer of snow. We reshuffled all the gear before parting ways and heading back to our respective homes in Virginia and Pennsylvania, our minds filled with fresh memories of a wonderful time in the Guads.

Special thanks go to our guides Stan Allison and Tom Bemis, as well as to Dale Pate at Carlsbad Caverns National Park, and Ransom Turner and Les Hagman at the Lincoln National Forest for the arrangements that made this trip possible. **The pictures resulting from our photo expedition can be viewed on Ed McCarthy's website "Caves of the Virginias" under a special section for the Guads, at: *www.geocities.com/~caves/***

Colorado Bend State Park
Half Hill Cave

Lampasas County
12 January 2002
Bill Allred, Adam Diaz, Xavier Diaz, Mark Gee, Chris Hall, Kyle Scott, Bryan Trowbridge, Paul Trowbridge

There are many bigger and better caves in Texas, but Half Hill Cave, which was first discovered in April 2001 by Rafal Kedzierski, Wayne Peblinski, R. D. Milhollin, Will Harris, Carson Sloan and myself, is a nice roomy cave, though short in length.

The cave is located on the east side of the park across the Colorado River, about a one-hour walk from the river. It is found on a downward slope, where a large area of the slope fell in to expose the entrance. This entrance area measures 40 feet across by 37 feet to the back of the entrance room. This room is fairly low; duck-walking is a needed skill. Most of this room drains to the center, where it has a ceiling height of 8 feet. At the north end of the entrance room is a drop of 8 feet to the second level.

On this crisp, cool morning, our survey crew was eager to get into the cave. On the way to Half Hill Cave, we decided to go to CB-17 so the kids in our group could climb down a tight 14-foot crevice and have a little fun. I wanted to see if they could handle the climb down. They did fine.

While waiting for the kids, Paul and Chris went down the dry creek bed to Falling Water Cave, discovered by Terry Holsinger in May 2001. Paul left Chris at Falling Water and headed back to CB-17 and got lost. A little later, Chris walked back up to CB-17, but Paul didn't show. I decided to head on to Half Hill Cave to get started enlarging the opening to the second level. When Paul showed up, they all would follow.

I set my GPS for Half Hill and headed that way. When I got to where the cave was supposed to be, it wasn't there. I figured my GPS location was a little off. To spot the cave, I climbed up on a tall cedar tree stump and looked for the large oak tree at the cave entrance. I saw it about 70 yards away, so I climbed down and walked over to it. I was hoping the rest of the group wouldn't have the trouble I had locating the cave.

I was surveying today with Chris Hall, Paul Trowbridge and son Bryan, Bill Allred and sons Xavier and Adam Diaz, and Kyle Scott. The only people with survey experience were Chris and myself.

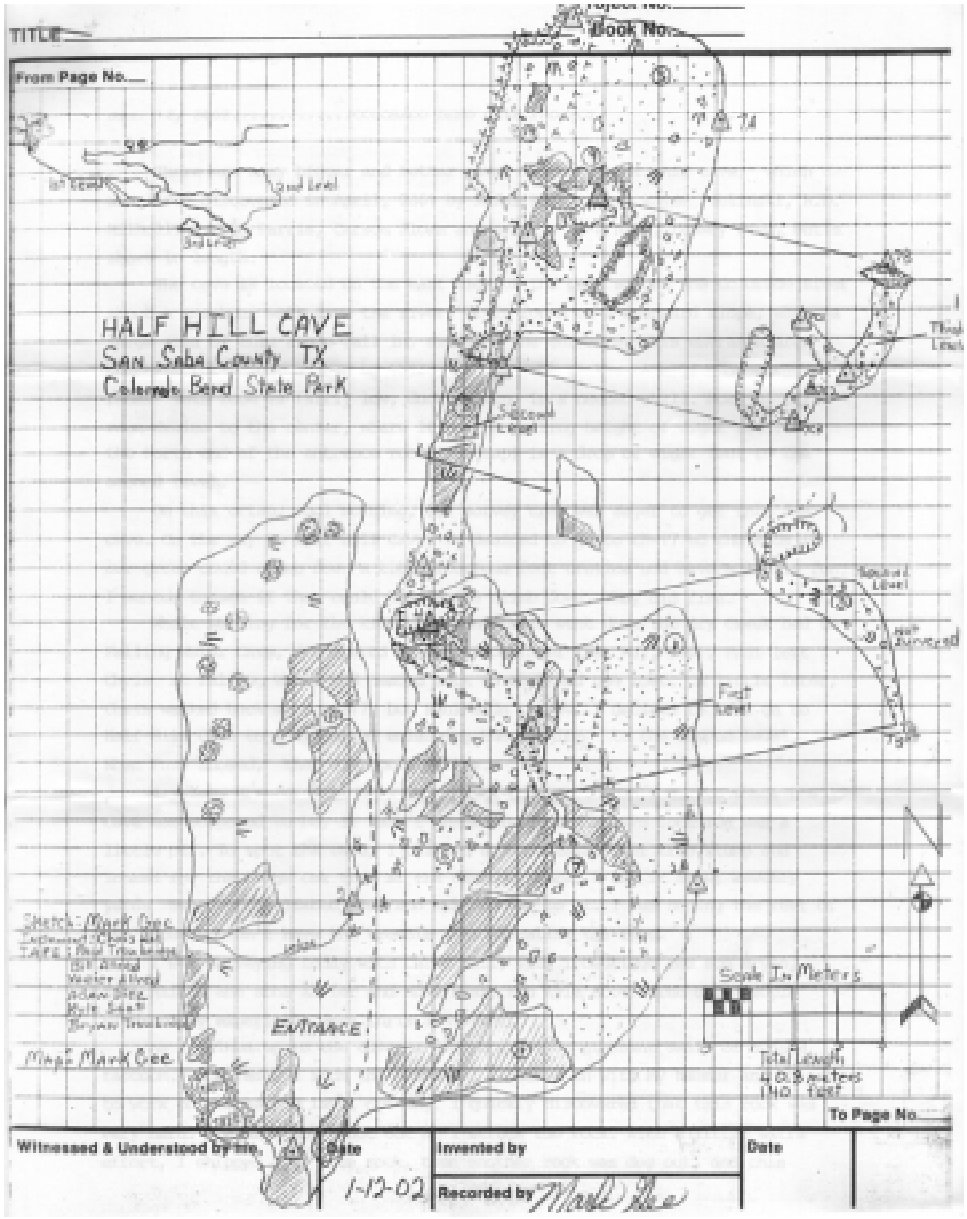
As I walked up to the cave, I noticed the not-so-pleasant smell of a dead raccoon. Once that was removed from the entrance, I headed in with my hammer and chisel to work on the second-level opening. I quickly discovered that this rock was very hard. Sparks would shoot out as I struck the rock. With a little extra effort, I chipped away some rock, then another rock was dug out, and this opened up the small hole. Now I was able to slip down to the lower level. I climbed back to the surface to wait on the rest of the group. I yelled out a few times, then a few more times, and got a response from somewhere way off to the west. They homed in on my voice – they had a wrong GPS location as well.

All eight of us made it to the cave, so Chris Hall and I began to survey. Chris picked up the tape and Paul got the other end. We directed Paul where to set the stations, and made very quick progress. Four stations got the entrance room with one splay shot. The next shot was down the drop to the second level. That done, we began to survey the passage ahead, which was a 6-foot-wide crevice that then entered a solutional passage. The ceiling of this room looks as if bats live here during the summer.

This room and passageway measured 42 feet long by 20 feet wide, with a 15-foot dome ceiling to the west side. Flowstone covered the west wall from floor to ceiling under the dome. The whole room sloped to an opening in the center of the floor. This small opening had numerous sharp rocks around its opening and a nasty sharp turn back under to the right which didn't allow me to crawl in. I did drop my head into the hole to get a look. I asked Chris if he could make it. He bent down, looked, and headed in. Bill followed him down into the third level. They shot five more stations in this very small passage, adding another 27 feet to the survey. While they surveyed, I sketched the second level and recorded the information as they gave it to me. After they finished surveying and crawled back out, it was already past 5 p.m. I quickly finished sketching and we left the cave, heading toward our GPS boat location.

One hour later, we reached the river and our kayaks. We paddled across to the other side, put our boats on my truck boat rack, and headed for camp. We all fixed our dinners, then talked over our day of caving with the others around the campfire. Afterwards, I slept like a rock, only because Wayne put a rock under my sleeping bag. Thanks, Wayne!

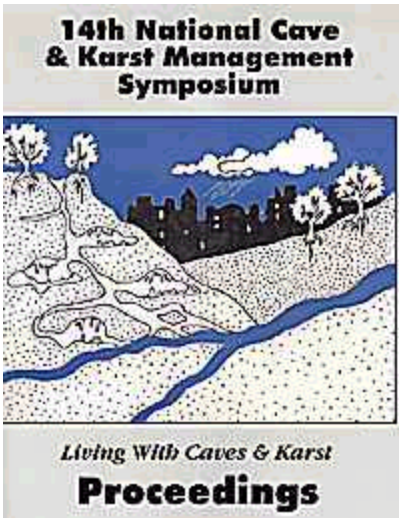
See ya next month at Colorado Bend!



A sketch of Half Hill Cave from Mark Gee's survey book.

BOOK REVIEW

Bill Mixon *billmixon@worldnet.att.net*



Proceedings of the 1999 National Cave and Karst Management Symposium, Chattanooga, Tennessee, October 19–22, 1999.
G. Thomas Rea, editor. Southeastern Cave Conservancy, Chattanooga, Tennessee; 2001. 8.5 by 11 inches, 221 pages, softbound. $15.

This is a pretty typical proceedings volume for these biennial symposia. It contains 37 short papers and 26 abstracts. It is nicely produced, although some figures could have been sharper; it appears some people don't know they should not apply JPEG compression to scans of parts of topo maps. And to the eternal annoyance of librarians everywhere, the title on the cover is not the same as the title on the title page. (I've used the title page above.) Two papers, both longer than average, and three abstracts deal with Central Texas. The papers are "Principles and Practice for Design of Cave Preserve Management and Monitoring Plans for Invertebrate Species of Concern, San Antonio," by Kemble White and Kenneth Kingsley, and "Urbanism and Cave Conservation in Central Texas," by Kristin Miller and Lee Sherrod.

The volume is available from Speleobooks (*www.speleobooks.com*, $19.50 postpaid), the NSS Bookstore (*www.caves.org/service/bookstore/*, $21.00 postpaid), or the American Cave Conservation Association Bookstore (*www.cavern.org*).





The TSA Bookstore

back issues (those not out of print) of the Texas Caver magazine
1963 to 2000 $0.25 to $1

T-Shirts: Texas Bat and Oztotl in a variety of colors and sizes
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Patches: TSA

www.texascavers.com/tsa/bookstore/bookstore1.htm

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