



Permian Basin Outing Club

October Trip Destination Changed

After much consideration, the club has decided to change the destination of the October trip to Albuquerque to McKittrick Canyon in the Guadalupe Mountains. It was felt that a trip of 800+ miles should be scheduled for a 3 day, holiday weekend, such as Labor Day or Memorial Day weekend. This makes sense and we should have thought of that when we were making up the calendar in May, but in our zeal to complete the calendar for publication, we just didn't think of the problem of distance and time....(Einstein would have considered it!) The original idea of picking the weekend of October 13th was to combine backpacking with Albuquerque's annual Balloon Festival. What a sight from Sandia Ridge! At any rate, the dates remained the same but we're shortening the travel considerably by moving our destination to the Guads.

Now, a little about McKittrick Canyon. This is a trip that the old PBOC made on a regular basis, especially around late October to early November. If you've never been to McKittrick Canyon, you've missed a treat. The McKittrick Canyon trail is extremely easy, as trails go, and has very few ups and downs (a few but not terribly strenuous) and is a photographer's dream. The canyon is covered in deciduous trees that turn every shade of red, gold, rust, etc. after the first cool spell. Usually this happens in late October or early November but could turn earlier this year. No one can predict exactly when the fall foliage is at peak but the National Park does a good job at coming close. If you're a photographer, this is a chance for some very dramatic pictures. Even in mid-summer and mid-winter, McKittrick has something for every taste. There is a perpet-

ual stream that runs along the canyon and has a species of trout that is always present (where would they go, you ask). I can't stress enough that this is a mild walk and the payoff is always worth it. It is a day hike and requires no backpack. A daypack with food, water, and photographic gear is all that is needed for a successful trip. Camping will probably be at the Parks Ranch, across the road from the Guadalupe and is Bureau of Land Management Land which means we have full access and can camp wherever we want and even have campfires if conditions allow it. Also, Parks Ranch is covered with gypsum caves if you missed the September caving trip or just want more! Details will be provided at the October meeting. But mark your calendars for the weekend of October 13th for McKittrick Canyon!

(November trip update cont.)

it from the seat of a helicopter at a couple of thousand feet and wanted desperately to land for a closer look. David has actually been in the Solitario and confirms that the trip is worth it. There are a lot of really spooky stories about things in the Solitario and "sightings". David even has a personal account of something that happened to him there that corresponds with earlier accounts of "hauntings". He can save that for later for those of you that haven't heard the stories, then you can judge for yourself! We should know fairly soon if we gain access to the Solitario. If we don't gain access, I'm planning a scenic backpack in Big Bend National Park that is appropriate for the time of year. Mule Ears Peak trail is a great November trail and features a day hike to a little known waterfall out in the middle of the desert. There are many other options in the park but Mule Ears is one of the old club's favorite hikes and isn't terribly strenuous. Rick Gray and I have made the trip several times and hiked the entire length of the trail, there and back, under a full moon, in the middle of the night. That's a trip! More on this when we get some updated information from David. Now on to page two.

November Trip Update

As you may or may not know, the November 10th backpacking trip to the Big Bend may provide an opportunity to see a part of the country that very few people have seen. No, we're not changing the destination or date on this trip but are looking into the pos-

sibility of backpacking into the Solitario. The Solitario was, for many years, on private ranch land and inaccessible to the public. The area is now on Big Bend State Park land but is still, evidently, hard to get permission to get into. David Crum is working

to get us into the area. We will definitely be backpacking into the Big Bend but this is a rare opportunity to get into a very rarely visited area. The Solitario is a geologically and photographically, a splendid place to see. I, personally, have only seen

Christmas Party

It seems early to be talking about this but the PBOC Christmas Party is scheduled for December 2nd and we still don't have a place to hold it. We do have Sibley Center if we get down to the nub but it won't be the same. In the past, we have had parties at the Clusters Apartment Complex party room but, as far as I know, none of our members live at the Clusters. The club usually buys a shrimp platter or some other "entrée" and everyone just brings a plate of finger food or desserts. We have a slide show, and, we don't have to do this if you don't want to but we did a white elephant gift exchange. You wouldn't believe some of

the things that showed up. Early on there was an extremely narrow, hot pink, leopard spotted tie. It was so tacky that it made a re-appearance every year. Whoever ended up with it each year had to swear that they would be in attendance the following year or send the tie with someone else to keep it in circulation. Anyway, if you have an idea or want to host the Christmas Party, please let me know or call or email Olivia (she's in charge and has been looking for an appropriate spot for the shindig.



Early.....aren't I?

and a bit goofy looking!

2007 PBOC Calendar

Everyone needs to start thinking about the 2007 PBOC Calendar. Where do you want to go and what do you want to do. It's apparent that, as hard as we worked on it, this year's calendar had some problems with timing or activities. We didn't know at the time that gas was going to top \$3 a gallon but that has been a sore point for some of us.

Nature Quote for the Month

"Eagles may soar, but weasels don't get sucked into jet engines."

Dribble

No, this isn't a story about basketball. It's just, well, have you ever tried to completely fill up one of these Publisher Newsletter formats. You dribble on and on, reiterating points ad-nauseum. You make a point and make it again, trying to sound scholarly, but usually failing. You'd think that anyone that was bright enough to come up with these Publisher templates would know that someone, much like myself, would come along and not really have enough news items or comments to

fill up all of their panels. I put the stupid Santa clip art above, not to be cute or thematic but TO FILL UP SPACE. HEY, IF YOU CAPITALIZE, YOU TAKE UP EVEN MORE SPACE! I SHOULD HAVE THOUGHT OF THAT SOONER! ANOTHER THING THAT GRIPES ME.....SOMETIMES I DON'T WANT THE FIRST LETTER OF A NEW SENTENCE TO BE CAPITALIZED AND....POOF!...IT'S CAPITALIZED WITHOUT MY PERMISS-

SION! Anyway, I guess one thing that I could get on a high horse about is contributions from members; items to put in the newsletter. Trail recipes, travel tips, backpacking or other outdoor tips, you know, like they do in Backpacker Magazine. Ways to keep matches dry, how to find directions using your wristwatch and a twig, gorp recipes,you know useful things. I'm glad that I'm clever enough to never have to resort to a bunch of dribble just to fill up those pesky Publisher column inches!

PBOC Trip to Ess Cave—Copied from The Hole News, The PBSS Newsletter, by Jacqui Thomas

PBSS Shows Ess Cave to Members of the Permian Basin Outing Club Submitted by Jacqui Thomas

Trip Report: Ess Cave 08-09 September 2006

PBSS Members present: Bill Bentley, Barry Hayes, Kel Thomas, Jacqui Thomas. PBOC members present: Ron Alton, Josh Eilenberger, & youths: Jacob, Sam, Autumn, Megan, Vicky, Charlie and Virginia Burkes, also Patrick Dearen, Dick Harris, Sammy Hunnicut and his son Colin, Carlla McCullough, Don Moore, and Steven Schafersman.

Kel & Jacqui Thomas arrived at Ess before dark Friday and started setting up camp. Bill Bentley arrived shortly thereafter. The evening was spent at the campfire, telling stories

and visiting. Saturday morning Barry arrived first, bringing the ladder to use on the first drop (the second drop, which is much shorter, already has a ladder). As Outing Club members arrived the ladder was installed, helmets were passed around, and lights were checked. Each PBOC member was belayed down the ladder, guided down the second ladder, and led into the cave. Club members spent different amounts of time in the cave, and there were enough Grotto members to accommodate multiple departures. Ron, Josh, and the youth wandered the cave extensively with Kel and Jacqui, and even squeezed into a couple of holes that blow slightly and seem to lead to an upper chamber. (There are advantages to being young, slender and flexible). Everyone seemed to have a good experience: When the last group left the cave, one of the young peo-

ple, beaming, announced, “That was awesome!” As if that wasn’t worth the trip right there, PBSS also gained two new members, Sam and Colin Hunnicut.

This from Richard:

I want to thank Bill Bentley (a friend for many years) and his willing group of cavers from the PBSS for volunteering to lead this trip for the PBOC. Bill was one of the original PBOC members many years ago when we initiated the club and he has always come through when I’ve asked him to arrange and lead caving trips and help with other projects, i.e. the PBOC rappelling trip to the Davis Mountains this year. We appreciate you Bill!

Second Nature Quote

“The early bird catches the worm but it’s always the second mouse that gets the cheese.”



“I wonder where this goes.....”



Pat Dearen checking on.....something?....



Note how clean everyone is



The “after” aren’t you glad you use Tide version

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The Permian Basin Outing Club is a program of the Sibley Nature Center. The original club was initiated in 1984 and stopped operations in 2001. The Sibley Nature Center saw the value in resurrecting a program that encouraged people to get outdoors and enjoy nature in all of her forms. The club was reactivated in March of 2006 and had its first trip the next month. A trip is planned every month of the year except in December which is reserved for a club Christmas Party. The annual cost of the club is \$25 which also enrolls the participant as a member of the Sibley Nature Center with all privileges the Sibley membership carries including Sibley Member Only events, a quarterly newsletter and many other services and programs. The Permian Basin Outing Club issues a monthly “e-newsletter” to each of its members.



A minnow's eye view of a bass



Bill Bentley and leaders from PBSS



Some of the Big Spring contingent



Pat Dearen doing his best “deer in the headlight” imitation



Here, just let me push this rock out of the way.....



You want me to follow you where?!!

Thanks to Steve Schafersman for all of the great pictures!

Next Meeting: As promised, the next meeting will be at a restaurant in Midland so bring your appetites! Jorge's Mexican Restaurant at 4400 N. Big Spring Street in Midland at 6:30 p.m. on Tuesday, October 10th. We will be discussing the October McKittrick Canyon trip and handing out maps to Park's Ranch (our campsite). Attend even if you're not planning to go on the trip!