

# Trails

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**Special points of interest:**

- Big Bend in January was surprisingly warm!
- Be the first to plan February's jump off of a 270 cliff!
- Canoeing trip in May schedule change...sorry

## Preparation for a cold trip to Big Bend unfounded

Most of us that went on the trip to Mule Ears in January planned for cold weather (since our two previous trips there proved to be bone chilling), but we were graced with incredibly warm weather. A short rain shower Friday at midnight had me up in shorts and boots putting the rain fly on my tent and I was very warm during the whole process! In fact, the cold weather sleeping bag that I brought was uncomfortable!

Everyone arrived at the trailhead on Friday morning through Friday afternoon and we got our usual staggered approach going into the campsite which was about 2 to 2 and 1/2 hours away. Bill Bentley left Midland during the pre-dawn hours Friday morning and actually had to wait for the Ranger Stations to open Friday in order to get his permit to enter the park. I got to the trailhead just after David and Kay Crum and visited with them for a while.

### February Meeting

The club will meet at its usual haunt, Casa Lopez Restaurant at 4415 W. Illinois in Midland on Tuesday, February 24th at 6:30 p.m. We will be talking about the upcoming February

I decided to wait for John Barnett. John eventually showed up and we started on the trail together. If you've not been on the Mule Ears Trail, it's much like a roller coaster but not too strenuous until you reach the end of the trail where you lose about 250 feet (which, of course, you have to regain on your way out Sunday) but the trail is well designed with plenty of switchbacks. When John and I arrived at the campsite, Bill, David, and Kay had already put up their tents and were having an early supper. John and I split up and put up our tents and joined the group for a communal supper. We managed to stay up for awhile and visit and then we split up for the night.

Saturday morning came and John, David, Kay, and Bill decided to day hike over to the waterfall and pool near Smokey Creek. For whatever reason I decided to laze around camp and do a little

solo hiking (I've been to the waterfall numerous times and decided that I wanted to see some new sights). After several hours everyone started drifting in and found their tents for a late lunch. David, Kay and I went down the creek bed to find shade...if you can believe that it was warm enough to even want that! Bill eventually joined us and all of us found the spot so appealing that the whole group eventually ended up there for supper and photographic opportunities of the setting sun painting the far mountains. We eventually went back to the unofficial gathering area (David and Kay's tent) and lit several candles which later became an unofficial campfire. Much discussion ensued. The night proved a little cooler than the previous night..much to everyone's liking. On Sunday morning everyone left camp at different times to start the hike back. This was a very comfortable trip and much enjoyed by all.

27th trip to the Davis Mountains and to Point of Rocks park to rappel. For those of you that have never been there, this would be a great time of year (hopefully)

to see the mountains from the high vantage point of our rappelling area. As always, even if you're not planning to go on the trip, this is a great opportunity to come visit your fellow club members!

## February Trip—February 27th-March 1st

We will once again be going to the Davis Mountains for a little “high angle” fun on the ropes. Point of Rocks park is a roadside park about 11 miles out of Ft. Davis. We have been using this area for decades to rappel and to put up new climbing routes. There is even a book of climbing routes out there somewhere which proves the popularity of the area. My friend Chuck Lohn put up many “firsts” in his formative years as a climber (Chuck now owns an outfitting and guide service out of the Dallas area...”Hangdog Expedition”...and he takes clients all over the world including the Himalayas, the Andes, and Mexico...and he got his start

where the club will be on this trip! The edifice is about 260 to 270 feet high. We have a 100 meter rope so there won't be any need to traverse over a rope at the ledge about half-way down. If you've not done this before it's quite a thrill. I will furnish all of the gear and instruction. You should plan to wear footwear that is “adhesive”...more for the hike up the mountain than the actual rappel...and take a day pack or fanny pack with plenty of water and maybe a snack since we'll be on the mountain for the better part of the day.

This is a very safe sport and you will be tied in to the

mountain the whole time so even if you have trouble you'll be under our complete control. We've taught ages 5 to 75 so make plans to attend. You'll have to make your own arrangements for camping (discussed below). Do me a huge favor and let me know if you're planning to attend so that I can bring the appropriate amount of equipment.

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## Camping in the Davis Mountains

*“Never before have so many people with so little to say said so much to so few.”*

This year we're asking everyone to make their own camping arrangements for the rappelling trip...(there's a reason for this). Most members camp at the Davis Mountains State Park. The fees are very reasonable and there are indoor restrooms and showers! Some members in the past have arranged for hotels/motels. I

have provided links to all of the different possibilities.

This trip has always been large and popular and everyone has thoroughly enjoyed the activities and the scenery. Remember, if you get there and decide that you don't want to do the rappel, no one is going to force

you...but it makes for great photography! Here are the links for accommodations that I promised you:

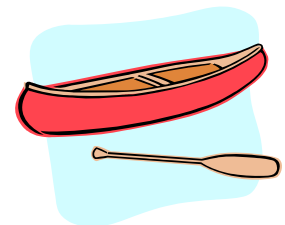
[www.tpwd.state.tx.us/spdest/findadest/parks/davis\\_mountains/](http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us/spdest/findadest/parks/davis_mountains/)

<http://www.fortdavis-tx.worldweb.com/Wheretostay/>

## May 24th Canoeing Trip

Despite our best efforts to complete and leave unchanged our PBOC schedule, we will probably need to change the May 24th date for the canoeing trip through Colorado Canyon. I wanted to let you know now and I'll have the new date posted very soon. It's odd that in the 17 year history of the old PBOC club, we probably changed our

calendar maybe twice. I think that it's an artifact of much busier lives now. We were all in our 20's and 30's then and had few responsibilities...(or took our responsibilities much more lightly). At any rate, I'll let you know by the next newsletter about the change. It will most likely still be in May but will have to shift over a week or so in either direction.





John Barnett finds a natural "lounger" - photo by Kay Crum



The waterfall was running as usual...as was Mule Ears Springs! - photo by Bill Bentley



David and Kay have a new baby!...(the kid's the one on the left) - photo by Kay



Bill at the falls—photo by Bill Bentley (no...I'm not sure how he did it either)

*"I expected times like this—but I never thought they would be so bad, so long, and so frequent."*



Our view from camp—photo by Richard



Our new editor

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