



UTG NEWS

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE U.T. GROTTO
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EDITOR'S MESSAGE

Welcome to the first issue of the UTG News since 1978. As you can see we do not have any art work for the title block. Art work for this would be greatly appreciated since I am not an artist! This newsletter is intended to serve as an information source for cavers. In order for this idea to work, everyone needs to submit information, articles, cartoons, trip reports, announcements, or anything else of interest to cavers. If you have extra caving gear that you want to sell, call me and I will put an announcement in the next issue. If this newsletter is to be successful, everyone must contribute. I will accept information in almost any format. You can call me on the phone (either talk to me live or talk to my answering machine), send me a postcard or letter, scribble something on a napkin, or just tell me in person. You can even give me a diskette (3.5" or 5.25"). All I ask is that you submit. Without your submissions, you will have to read whatever I choose to write.

Now, for my first order of business as editor, I need a volunteer to take over being the editor during the months of April and May. Caving will take me away from Austin to the deepest, darkest jungles of Guatemala to explore and survey caves. During my absence, the Grotto would appreciate a volunteer to take over and publish a newsletter. So, once again, I must beg, will someone please step forward.

Thanks,

WHAT TO EXPECT FORM YOUR FIRST CAVE TRIP?

You are going on your first cave trip. You have many questions. What should I wear? What should I bring? Why am I doing this?

To answer the first question, you need to wear clothes that you don't mind getting dirty. You will want to wear long pants and at least a shirt. Some people like to wear long sleeved shirt as extra protection for their elbows. For even more protection, knee pads are very welcome in smaller caves (elbow pads help too). As a helpful hint, don't wear white (because it probably won't ever be white again.) The next thing you need to bring is a change of clothes. This is very important since you will be dirty when you exit the cave. Clean clothes are also appreciated by either your car or whoever's car you are riding in.

As for what you should bring. You should bring flashlight(s) with extra batteries and bulbs, a canteen (or water bottle), some kind of indestructible food (i.e. candy, granola bars,

etc.; you should avoid bananas since they quickly become goo!), some kind of pack to carry your stuff, and last but not least, bring some money to help out the driver and to buy yourself a victory beer, soft drink, and/or meal. The Grotto keeps on hand items such as hard hats and some lights. Please check on the availability of these with the trip leader.

The last question is probably the hardest to answer. I have been asking myself that question for the past twelve years. My best answers are thing like "TO BOLDLY GO WHERE NO ONE HAS GONE BEFORE", "it's just so damn fun", "it sure beats work or school", and simply "WHY NOT!". Why one should go caving is an individual thing. Caving gives one a sense of accomplishment and achievement. Caving makes a wonderful escape from all of the pressures of the real world. The best reason to go caving is for the experience. Try caving and then ask yourself that question.

Have a good trip.

HOW TO GAIN MORE EXPERIENCE CAVING

Cavers are, in most cases, very helpful and very willing to assist new cavers. Please feel free to contact any of the following people for information or use them to answer your questions. After the Grotto meetings, cavers are available to answer any and all of your questions. Remember: we all were beginners at one time or another.

LOCAL CAVING

(day, evening, weekend trips)

Allan Cobb	873-0256
Terry Holsinger	443-4241
William Russell	453-4774
Tim Stitch	499-8289
Jim Wolff	440-8352

VERTICAL TRAINING & PRACTICE

(rope techniques)

Allan Cobb, Susie Lasko, & Peter Sprouse (873-0256) have a tree in the backyard with ropes that can be used for practice. We also have a plethora of gear that can be tried. We are available most evening and most weekends. Feel free to contact us for help and advise on vertical systems.

Alex Villagómez (280-5507) also has a tree in his backyard with ropes for practice. Alex has a wide selection of gear available to try out.

CAVING GEAR SALES

In Austin:

Whole Earth Provision Co.
444-9974 or 478-1577

REI

474-2393

Wilderness Supply

476-3712

Los Gatos

(Specializes in caving & climbing gear)

Alex Villagómez -- 280-5507

In San Antonio:

Gonzo Guano Gear

(Specializes in caving gear)

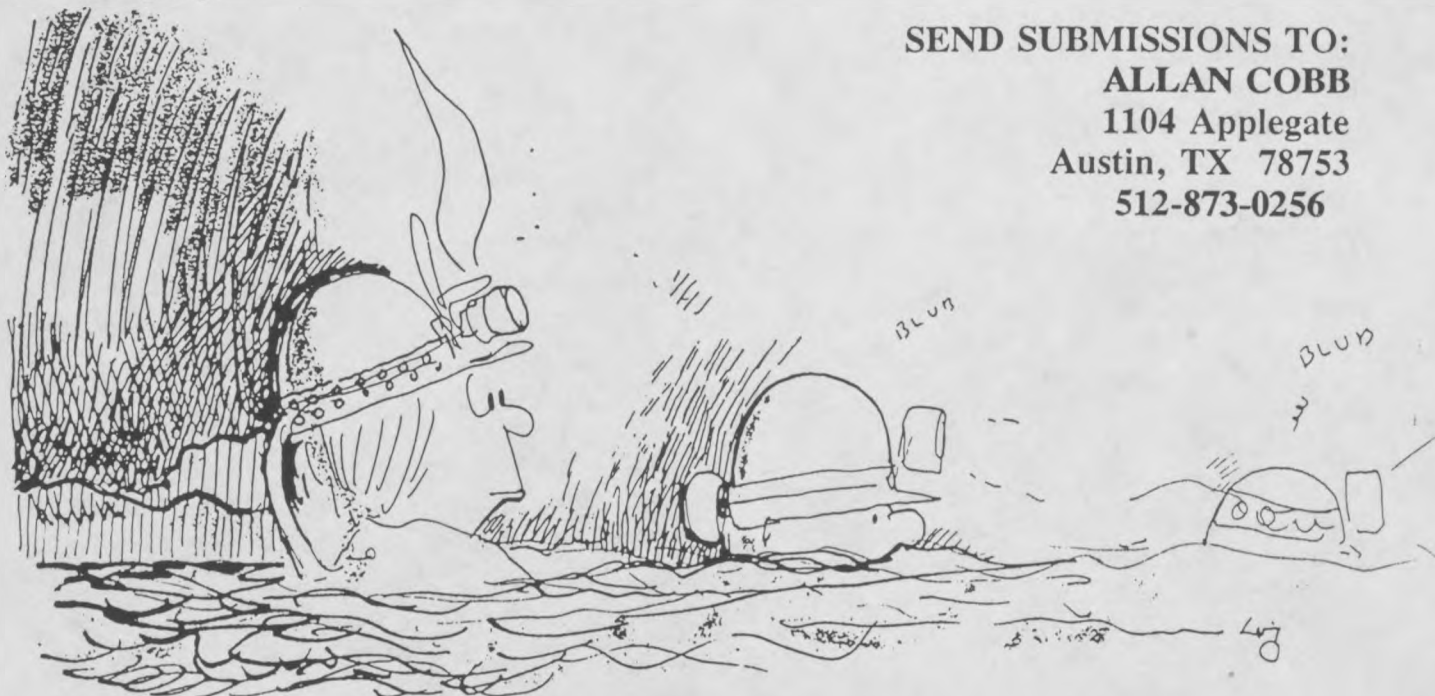
Joe Ivy/Linda Palit -- 210-699-1388

In West Virginia:

Bob & Bob

mail order, accepts check and credit cards
(304) 772-5049 or 772-3074

**> For the next issue, I would like beginners to write a brief (100 words or more) blurb about your first caving trip.



SEND SUBMISSIONS TO:

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