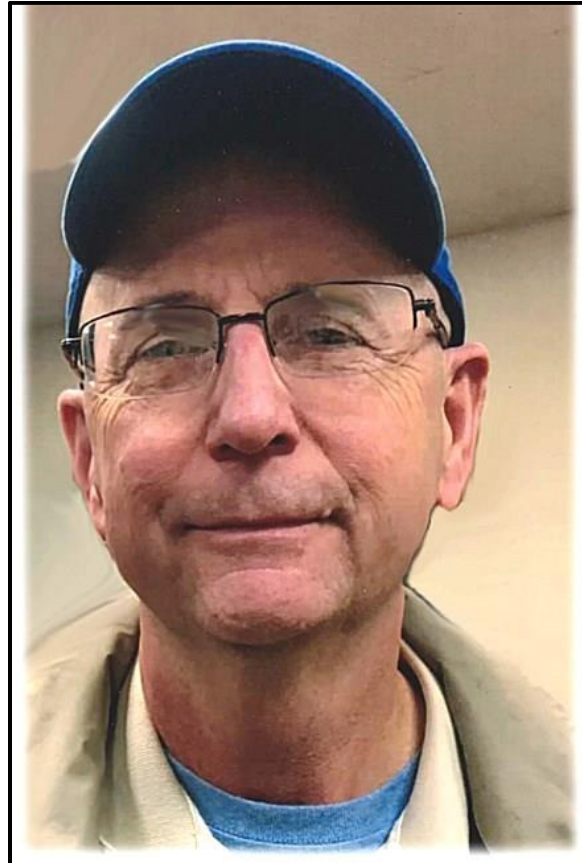


## John Michael “Mike” Hennessy

15 March 1955 – 6 January 2020, 64



John Michael “Mike” Hennessy was born March 15, 1955 to John Edward and Lillian Victoria (Welch) Hennessy and passed from this world on January 6, 2020.

He is survived by his mother, Billie; his sisters, Katie (Steve) Mangold and Mimi (Kevin) Asher; his brother, Jim (Lori); nieces and nephews. He also leaves behind his forever loving wife, Rhonda and their fur babies, Abbey and Gunner who miss him terribly.

Mike was a friend of Bill W. for 32 years and lived a life of humility and service. When anyone reached out for help Mike was always willing to be available and made many lifelong friends that he maintained ties with. The world is a little better for Mike having been in it and we are all a little better for having had him in our lives.

A Memorial Service will be held at 1:00 pm on Saturday, January 18, 2020 at Weed-Corley-Fish Funeral Home, 2620 South Congress Avenue, Austin, Texas.

Donations in John “Mike” Hennessy’s name may be made to: The Humane Society of Austin, 124 W. Anderson Ln, Austin TX 78752 or the Salvation Army at: [give.salvationarmytexas.org](http://give.salvationarmytexas.org)

- FAMILY
- Rhonda Ray, Spouse
- John Edward Hennessy, Father (deceased)

- Billie Hennessy, Mother
  - Katie Mangold (Steve), Sister
  - Mimi Asher (Kevin), Sister
  - Jim Hennessy (Lori), Brother
  - Abbey and Gunner, Fur Babies
  - And Nieces and Nephews
- 
- DONATIONS
  - The Humane Society of Austin
  - Salvation Army

<https://www.dignitymemorial.com/obituaries/austin-tx/john-hennessy-8992867>

*by John Chelf, 13 January 2020*

Sad news to pass along. John Michael Hennessy, 64, passed away, in Austin, on 6 January 2020. Most of us knew him as Mike Hennessy. He was an active caver with the Southwest Texas State University grotto in the mid to late 1970s.

A memorial service was held at 1:00 pm, Saturday, 18 Jan 2020, at Weed Corley Fish Funeral Home, 2620 S. Congress, Austin, TX.

I knew Mike quite well back in the day. For the last 25 or 30 years, we had drifted apart, and our friendship was mostly the exchange of Christmas cards. Mike was one of those guys who wrote long, detailed holiday letters. His first wife, Barbara Condon was also a SWT caver. After San Marcos/Austin, they relocated to Oakland, CA, then to Idaho Falls. After their divorce in the mid '90s, Mike returned to Austin, and remarried. He never had children. Barbara also remarried, and stayed in Idaho. I believe they were acquaintances of Steve Zeman and Dino Lowrey. Unfortunately, I don't have any photos of him. I was too broke back then to own a good camera. However, Mike went on trips with both Keith Heuss and Mike Walsh, and Keith was big into picture taking back then. I plan to attend the service on Saturday, where I'm sure to find out more info. I'll send you something you can post the following week. The email I got from Barbara, telling of Mike's passing, had an obit attachment which would not open. I spent about an hour looking on line for an obit, but only found the funeral info posted by the funeral home.

**Texas Caver, Feb. 1977, p. 34**

Where: Emerald Sink, Langtry Quarry Cave, Pandale

When: 15-17 October 1976

Who: Philip Arterburn, Randy Bruno, John Chelf, Dale Elliott, Tom Garrett, **Mike Hennessy**, Keith Heuss, Alan Johnson

It was raining quite hard Friday afternoon in San Marcos. A few of us were thinking that it was a bad weekend to go caving, but we decided to go anyway. The eight of us loaded into John's truck and my van and were away from San Marcos by 6:30 P.M. We ran out of the cloud cover and into clear sky outside Del Rio. We spent Friday night at the Pecos River Bridge. Saturday morning we drove to Langtry and tried to call the owner of the caves. He wasn't in. We talked to J.R. at the west side gas station for a while. He gave us several names for cave leads. We drove to the ranch house near Emerald Sink where we talked to Kendall Billings for a while. From there we drove to Lee Billings' house 6 miles down the road. After getting permission to enter the caves, we drove back and parked near Emerald Sink. We entered the cave just after noon. We all rappelled the 140' pit. We continued down the crawlway to the second pit. We rigged the 75' rope and John rappelled into the pit. He

stopped near the top when he saw the rope wasn't on bottom. We returned to the bottom of the 140' pit and began out. We were out of the cave about 11 hours after entering it. We camped near Langtry Quarry Cave. After the cave, we drove to Langtry for a while. We decided to return by way of Pandale. We stopped at the Pecos River crossing to eat and clean up. We drove on to Ozona and returned by way of IH-10 and Highway 46. We arrived in San Milrcos at about 12:00 midnight.

*Compiled by William R. Elliott, 22 January 2020*