

Walter D. Feaster

December 17, 1950 – February 3, 2021, 70

NSS #31624



One of my photos of Walter in Abyss Sinkhole, Aug, 2000. Terry Holsinger.

Walter Feaster, 70, of Midland, Texas, passed away February 3, 2021. No service is planned. Cremation was arranged under the direction of Nalley-Pickle & Welch Funeral Home & Crematory of Midland. Online condolences may be made at www.npwelch.com.

To plant Memorial Trees in memory, please visit Sympathy Store.

Published in Midland Reporter-Telegram on Feb. 5, 2021. See <https://www.legacy.com/obituaries/mrt/obituary.aspx?pid=197660403>

Walter was a West Texan and a machinist. He was born in Monahans to Emmert and Rita Feaster, and he graduated from high school there in 1967. After service in the Navy, he returned, and later he was in Odessa, then Midland, Texas.

We found Walter in 22 issues of *The Texas Caver* from 1993-2012 (below). Walter was involved in the PBSS (Permian Basin Speleological Society) for years; he was Treasurer and/or Secretary most of the time. He caved mostly in West Texas and New Mexico, at Carlsbad Caverns, Fort Stanton Cave, Montgomery Gypsum Cave, O-9 Well, and Amazing Maze. He managed access to the latter two caves (with Gralin Coffin at Amazing Maze). He worked hard at cave restoration and conservation, working in Carlsbad and the annual Caverns of Sonora Restoration Project (14 times), where he and Gralin provided about 100 5-gal. pickle buckets for the job for years.

Walter was well-liked. Walter's neighbor across the street donated a kidney to him when he was in need, according to a newspaper article by Audrie Palmer (Midland Reporter-Telegram, September 20, 2011).

Bill Bentley on Facebook, Feb 3, 2021:

The West Texas caving world lost a great guy, caver, helper, volunteer, friend, and one hell of a rock hauler this morning. Walter Feaster, who has been ill for quite some time, lost his battle and has moved on to greener pastures. I hope he is enjoying Guinness in Heaven now. Good bye my old friend.

He will be cremated and there will be no services at his request.

Marvin Miller Feb 5, to Texascavers

Bill Bentley posted on Facebook that Walter Feaster has died. I met him once at Amazing Maze and I might have seen him at conventions or TCR.

George Veni via texascavers.com

Walter was an important member of the Texas caving family for many years, especially for West Texas. I knew he hadn't been well for some time, and remember him especially as a great and regular member of the Caverns of Sonora Restoration Team during the 14 years of that project. I'll always appreciate and miss him for what he did for caves, and will miss him as a friend.

Jaqui LaRue Thomas via texascavers.com

Walter was a stalwart member of PBSS. I met him the year PBSS hosted Spring Convention at the Caverns of Sonora (2001?) and I joined PBSS shortly thereafter. Walter was Treasurer and/or Secretary for the whole time I was in Texas and was the editor of the Hole News for many years. He was the keeper of the Sonora Restoration 5 gallon buckets and his breakfast tacos were an event unto themselves. He worked on the Fort Stanton survey. He was fun to cave and camp with and had just enough curmudgeon in him to keep us all on our toes.

Rest in Peace, dear man.

Please see Gralin Coffin's separate obituary for his close friend.

Looking Back—

Walter Feaster was mentioned many times in the *PBSS Spylunk*, *The Hole News*, and other caving journals. Here are the 22 *Texas Caver* mentions from 1993-2012:

Texas Caver, 1993-v38-n03. Pictured with his PBSS buddies at a Carlsbad Caverns clean-up, November 21, 1992.

Texas Caver, 1993-v38-n04. Walter lived at 9100 Andrews Hwy, Apt. 1225, Odessa, TX 79765.

Texas Caver, 1994-v39-n01. Listed as a photographer or artist or cartographer in vol. 38, 47-48-49.

Texas Caver, 1994-v39-n03. Montgomery Gypsum Cave, Terrell County, Texas, by Gralin Coffin.

Present for trip: Gralin Coffin, trip leader, Bill Bentley, Walter Feaster, Noel Pando, Noel Pando Jr., Ken Kamon, Rick Day, all of PBSS fame, Pat Geery, Austin, Dan Hansen, North (rowdy) Colorado and David Williams.

Texas Caver, 1995-v40-n01. The 4th Annual Caverns of Sonora Restoration Project, George Veni, Walter Feaster and Gralin Coffin sent about 90 5-gallon buckets for the project.

Texas Caver, 1995-v40-n02. Access to 0-9 Well, North of Ozona, Gralin Coffin, (915) 682-1904, Walter Feaster, (915) 699-7049 . 5 persons Note: requires vertical equipment for pits with 130', 80', 60'', and three 10' drops and wetsuits. No trips from Sept. 5 through May 1. No pets or groundfires. Limit of four trips per year. Amazing Maze, Ft. Stockton, Gralin Coffin, (915) 682-1904, Walter Feaster, (915) 669-7049 No limit.

Texas Caver, 1996-v41-n04. TCMA, contact Walter Feaster and Gralin Coffin for access to 0-9 Water Well, Amazing Maze and other UT System caves.

Texas Caver, 1997-v42-n01. Walter Feaster (31624RE), listed from Midland. PBSS Sec./Treas.

Texas Caver, 1997-v42-n03. **The 1996 Sonora Restoration Project:** Many thanks to Walter Feaster and Gralin Coffin for providing dollies and 125 buckets, and to those cavers who loaned digging and other tools to the project. **0-9 Well Survey Trip** Crockett County, Texas by Terry Holsinger Personal: Lucile Berrones, Oscar Berrones, Walter Feaster, Eric Flint, Terry Holsinger, Joe Ivy, Vico Jones, Bonnie Longley, Patrick Lynott, Hunter Phillips, Charley Savvas, Rachel Savvas, Jennifer Townsden.

Texas Caver, 1998-v43-n01. The 1997 Sonora Restoration Project: Walter was present.

Texas Caver, 1998-v43-n06. Walter Feaster has for the past three years brought the lion's share of the 100+ buckets we use and abuse. Walter is the Permian Basin SS Midland/Odessa area contact.

Texas Caver, 1999-v44-n01. 1998 Caverns of Sonora Restoration Caver Crew: Walter was present.

Texas Caver, 2000-v45-n01. O-9 Well trip of August 8-9, 1998, call to Walter Feaster, manager.

Texas Caver, 2000-v45-n04. Back cover photo of Walter and cavers peering down the entrance shaft of 0-9 Well, by Aimee Beveridge [back page missing from KIP file]. Walter assisted a caver at O-9 Well who broke his leg.

Texas Caver, 2001-01-12-v46-n01-04. 1999 Caverns of Sonora Restoration Caver Crew: Walter was there. Walter was part of a restoration crew at Carlsbad Caverns. They ended at the Lake of the Clouds.

Texas Caver, 2002-03-01. For the rescue call-down list, Walter Feaster or Bill Bentley are good for far west Texas.

Texas Caver, 2002-12-01. 2002 Caverns of Sonora Restoration. Walter Feaster was there and provided buckets.

Texas Caver, 2005-04-v051-002. 13th Annual Caverns of Sonora Restoration, 2004. . Walter Feaster was there and provided buckets.

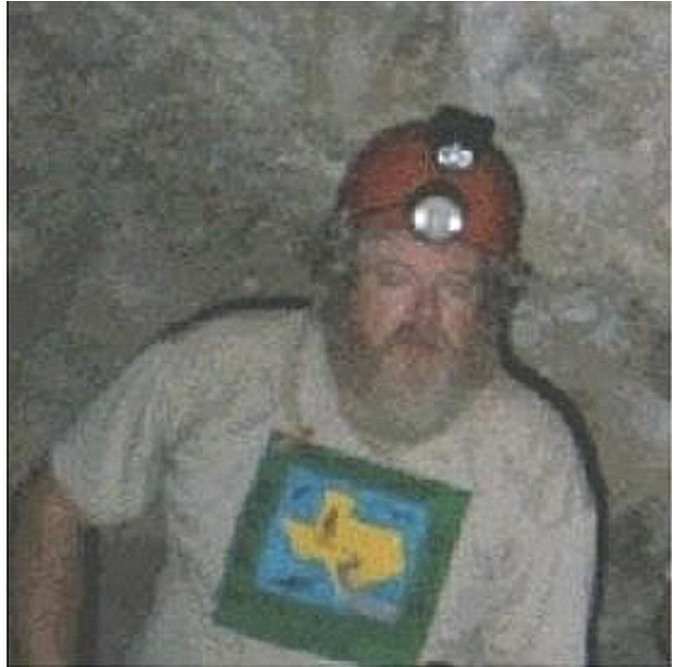
Texas Caver, 2006-01-03-v052-001. Caverns of Sonora Restoration Project, 1991-2005. Special thanks must go to Permian Basin Speleological Society Members Gralin Coffin and Walter Feaster, who collected and delivered about 100 buckets for our use, even for trips they couldn't attend, and Bill

Bentley for posting restoration photos on his website (<http://www.caver.net>) since 2000. Feaster Walter [31624REj 4307 Harvard Ave. Midland TX 79703 432-1559-3297 wdfeaster@cox.net

Texas Caver, 2006-v052-002. Walter Feaster has attended 10 Sonora Restoration trips.

Texas Caver, 2007-04-01. Feaster, Walter 31624RE, 4307 Harvard Ave. Midland, TX, c 432 - 559 - 3297 wdfeaster@cox.net PBSS

Texas Caver, 2012-12-01. PBSS generally has about thirty members, mostly cavers. Members have varied interests and the grotto has participated in exploration, digs, rock hauling for the National Park Service at Carlsbad, and introducing the unsuspecting to caving by taking them to such grand locations as Amazing Maze, Deep (Carta Valley) and Ess Caves. The Grotto meets monthly at Murray's Delicatessen in Midland, where topics of discussion include trip planning, landowner-caver relations, new discoveries, picture showing, and general caver-style socializing. 2012 officers are President: Matthew Ormsby; Vice President: Patrick Ray; **Treasurer: Walter Feaster**; and Secretary: Jacqui Thomas.



Photos of Walter by Bill Bentley.

Contributors to this obituary: William R. Elliott, Susan Hardcastle Beaty, Bill Bentley, Marvin Miller, George Veni, J. LaRue Thomas, and Gralin Coffin.