

Guads Trip: October 2004

MADONNA: *by Kristen*

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On Sunday, the 17th, Randy and I went to Madonna with Mike Huber to help with restoration. It was a very long 4 wheel drive out to the cave area, then a hike with a major drop in elevation to the entrance. Madonna has two drops. The first drop is 220 feet - the second is around 200 feet in a chimney. After shuttling bags and ropes to the first drop we discovered that the cave was already rigged and we didn't need to be hauling the extra ropes. The first drop follows a chimney for a short distance then opens out into a huge void. The drop was more challenging, but lots of fun as you rappel down a narrow crevice to the bottom of the cave.



Madonna is one of the most highly decorated caves found in the Guadalupe area. We did some work moving water for cleaning formations and checked out some other areas to document for restoration purposes. The trip out was much longer since it was ALL up. Ascending in a chimney can be fun but you do have to work at climbing. Then up the big drop another 220 feet - then drag the packs out to the entrance (along with the ropes we didn't need) - then up the steep back to the ridge - then over the ridge to the car (which by the way is called Guadzilla). All in all it was about a 12-hour trip - seven hours in the cave.

