



Friends of Guadalupe River, Honey Creek, Inc.

A non-profit organization

Presidents Letter

by Wilt Shaw

THE HONEY CREEK EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY

Teddy Roosevelt once suggested that we Americans develop a relationship with nature to cultivate a "vigorous manliness" and a "life of strenuous endeavor."

Remember the time or times you decided to head for the Park that Saturday morning and you found yourself taking the Honey Creek hike? You went to enjoy the beauty and serenity, to get some exercise and to take home memories of this wonderful natural setting. What you got was more than you bargained for!

The goal of your accompanying interpretive guides, I being one, is not only to lead you down a select path to and from the creek, but also to impart information about the history and impact of man on the surrounding environment and what the future might hold for this beautiful State Natural Area. We try to cover a myriad of topics such as habitation by native peoples, reshaping as a result of European influence, preservation of the savannah by fire, native grasses, geology, aquifers, myths and truths about ash juniper and ball moss, golden-cheeked warblers, nostoc, oak galls, feral pigs, cochineal, savannah and riparian flora and fauna. As you can see, we pretty much have to have a grasp of a wide range of subjects to get our point across.

If you want to find out more about these subjects, I guess you could "google" them, but without ever having been on "the hike," you might not even know about them.

A better idea might be to come back to Honey Creek for a "refresher." Surely a walk with an adept interpretive guide, using your senses to experience the outdoors with other enthusiastic hikers of all ages, is better than sitting in front of a computer monitor. There is no better educational tool than being encased in the environment you are learning about!

I recently spoke with Warren and Margy Lohoff of San Antonio who a few months ago decided to take the hike and shortly thereafter enrolled in the two month Texas Master Naturalist program and graduated a few days ago! QED.

Board of Directors

President

Wilt Shaw
830-230-5008
wshawjr888@aol.com

Vice President/Ed. Programs

Holly Camero
210-490-4882
CHCamero@aol.com

Secretary/Newsletter

Terry Urbanczyk
830-980-2311
rturban@gvtc.com

Treasurer

J.W. Pieper
830-336-3241
jwp.1@gvtc.com

Director/ Web Master

Dan Freeman
830-899-5539
alyeski@yahoo.com

Director/Maintenance Chair

Dave Kibler
830-336-3716
kjkib@gvtc.com

Director

Charlie McCarl
210-764-1707
flyngators@aol.com

Director/Past President

Tom Anderson
210-653-5225
tomander@texas.net

From the Park Manager's Desk

by Mark Abolafia-Rosenzweig

Spring has sprung and summer is upon us. But, what would summer in Texas be without a cool Texas river to play in? Hopefully we won't find out. However, at the start of May the Guadalupe River was sinking fast, running below 100 cubic feet per second (cfs) through the park. A rate of around 300 cfs is generally considered ideal for most river recreation pursuits on this section of the river. Despite early and mid-May rains that temporarily perked the river up over 300 cfs, limited ground moisture caused by about six months of well below normal rainfall is, as of this writing, resulting in the river quickly sinking back to around 100 cfs.

What all this means is that, if we don't get more rain soon, typical summer river activities will need to be adjusted to account for river conditions.

- Even in the parks deepest water holes the river level may only be waist deep on an adult. Jumping into the river without knowing how deep the water is or what may be on or protruding from the bottom is dangerous.

Slow flow rates will create slow float rates. Below 300 cfs, plan on trips taking extra time or take shorter trips. Remember to let someone know about your plans including where and when you will enter the river, where and when you plan to take out, who is in your party – including ages of all members, and the type of watercraft used. Also, if you are in a boat, be sure to wear a personal floatation device (it is the law).

- Areas of stagnant water should always be avoided as naturally occurring harmful organisms are most common in these areas.

- **Remember that at all flow rates all river activities can be dangerous. Enter the river at your own risk.**

- The park has its own water treatment plant and gets most of its potable water from the river. If the river level continues to fall the park may be limited on how much water we will be allowed to pump from the river. This may cause a reduction in park services or even closure of some facilities.

- Check at the park headquarters for current conditions, including estimated float times.

We want you to have an enjoyable and safe visit to Guadalupe River State Park. Awareness of current conditions and a little planning will help that happen. Finally, please do all that you can to conserve water.

Play safely!

Northside Update:

A proposal to develop the north side tract of Guadalupe River State Park has passed the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department cultural resources review process and is currently being reviewed by the appropriate natural resources coordinator and management personnel.

The proposal includes one parking area, approximately 7 miles of trails, (approximately 5.5 miles of which are equestrian trails), two primitive camping areas (one equestrian), and primitive restroom facilities. My aim is to have all approvals completed by June 30.

Parking and trail construction could start in October, after the this year's Golden Cheeked Warbler nesting season, and some trails might be open for limited public use by the spring of 2007.

Mark Abolafia-Rosenzweig
Park Manager Guadalupe River State Park and
Honey Creek State Natural Area

Honey Creek Homesteaders Homecoming

by Terry Urbanczyk

“Friends“ members and visitors know what a special place Honey Creek is but may not be fully aware of its true significance. Part of the reason the State of Texas purchased this land and preserves it as a State protected area is stated in the “Honey Creek Site Purpose Statement; “...to conserve the historic features,...for natural resource protection...and interpretive education that promote thoughtful appreciation and stewardship.”

The historic features we strive to protect and develop an appreciation for is the heritage of the hearty German immigrants who settled this area. A vital link to our rich cultural past is still alive and well in our community.

On May 6, a very special group of people with a unique background gathered at the Park Amphitheater as presenters for the Saturday Evening Program. These folks are the descendants of some of the original settlers in the Honey Creek area from the mid to late 1800's. They spoke of a time when the park land was simply one of many area farms and ranches with ties to the communities of Bergheim, Honey Creek, and Anhalt.

The presenters were: Mr. Adolph Scheel, Mrs. Jeanette Haecker-Scheel, Mrs. Carmen Beierle-Rittimann, Mr. and Mrs. Hilmer and Barbara Wehe, Mrs. Brenda Anderson-Lindemann, Mrs. Corinne Zunker, and Mrs. Bernadine Cobb. Each presenter brought a unique perspective and story about what life was like in the early days of Honey Creek.

Brenda Anderson-Lindemann and Carmen Beierle-Rittimann have extensively researched area cemeteries, countless courthouse documents and recorded many personal histories in order to compile an accurate historical account of the development of western Comal County which includes the Honey Creek area. She has published the book

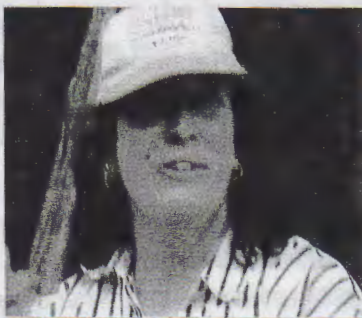
titled Spring Branch & Western Comal County, Texas, 1858-1998 which is a valuable resource. Through Brenda's personal interviews and extensive research she has been able to record personal family histories, preserve personal letters and other documents, thus giving us an insight into the day to day activities and development of this area which may have been otherwise lost.

Among other topics, she and Carmen spoke of the old stage coach roads that were used to travel from one community to the next. These roads were originally Indian trails through the woods. Blanco Road which begins at Five Points in San Antonio, headed north out of town toward the Guadalupe River near the beginning of today's Park Road 31 and Hwy 46. At that point the San Antonio-Blanco Road joined the Old Pinto Road which passed by present day St. Joseph's Church and the old 1879 Anhalt post office. The road continued on northward following present day Spring Branch Road where the first Guadalupe River crossing road was made at Specht's Crossing. From there the road continued on into Blanco. ***This road was the main road from San Antonio to Blanco until the construction of Hwy 281 in 1936*** when the present day iron bridge was built over the Guadalupe River.

Weary travelers could stop along the way and at the Freight Station on the Wehe Ranch still located south of Specht's Crossing on Spring Branch Road. Hilmer Wehe, descendent of an 1875 founder of Anhalt, and his wife Barbara restored the original structure and Station Bed and Breakfast.



Carmen Beierle-Rittimann



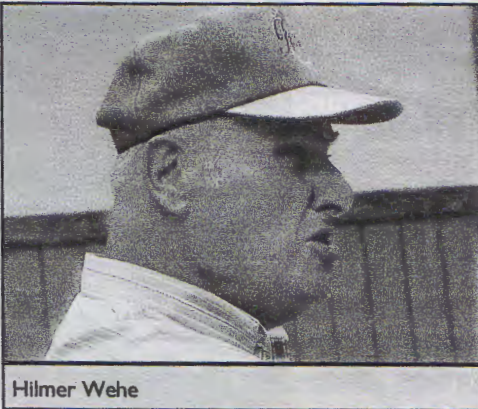
Brenda Anderson-Lindemann



Barbara Wehe

Honey Creek Homesteaders Homecoming (continued)

by Terry Urbanczyk



Hilmer Wehe

Barbara graciously displayed three original land deeds for land parcels in the Spring Branch area, signed around 1860 by none other than Sam Houston himself.

Barbara also presented portraits of Wehe Great-great-grandparents along with a hand written deed to farm land deeded to their son in exchange for a fatted hog, chickens, bushels of corn, hay and other supplies to care for them in their old age. Barbara and Hilmer have offered to donate copies of the original deeds, portraits and other documents to be displayed in the Rust House for all to see.

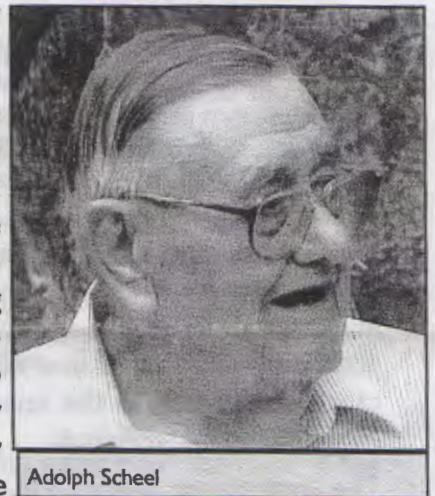
Mrs. Corinne Zunker who presently lives at the corner of Blanco Road and Hwy 46 across from Park road 31 is a great grand-daughter to Henry and Louisa Rust, the family which built the house know as the Rust House. The house was passed on to Corinne's Aunt Erna and her husband Herman Richter where they lived until they sold to the Nature Conservancy about 1972. Corinne said the road to now Guadalupe River State Park was a dirt road

that passed through her Aunts farm to her Grand-parent's. The river was on her family's farm land.

Corrine and Mr. Adolph Scheel attended Honey Creek School, located on the present day Park Road 31 near the "Kunz Settlement". The Honey Creek Public School was part of a community that in 1876 had the first log cabin St. Joseph's Honey Creek Church, a cemetery and a stage coach stop. Research by Brenda Lindemann state the earliest founding families of Honey Creek were Bechtold, Kunz, Kneupper, Hofheinz, Moos, Ludwig, Fey and Scheel.

The rock structure that is still visible through the trees just off the park road was the school teacher's house.

Corinne said the school was a wooden building that was disassembled and reused to build the present day Bulverde Elementary back around the 1940's.



Adolph Scheel

Mr. Adolph Scheel, now 94 years old, spoke of riding his horse to the Honey Creek School, where the boys duty after school was to saddle up the ponies and hitch up wagons for all the girls before they could go home.

Adolph, the great-grandson of Bernhard Joseph Scheel grew up on farmland purchased from the Moos family that ran from the Honey Creek Spring to present day Hwy 46. There were no fences, roads or electricity. The first telephone service to this area didn't arrive until the late 1920's when there was only party lines and you had to buy your own wire to connect to the phone system.

Adolph spoke of crossing neighboring farms to get to "the best fishing hole on the river, the spot where a high bluff hangs over the water, where big



Carmen Beierle-Rittman, Brenda Lindemann-Anderson, Corinne Zunker and Bernadine Cobb at GRSP Amphitheater.

Honey Creek Homesteaders Homecoming (continued)

by Terry Urbanczyk

catfish would sit in the water waiting for bird droppings and baby birds to fall into the water. That's where you could catch the really big catfish." Today that is the day use area of Guadalupe River State Park. That part of the river was not accessible to the public but sometimes. "people would drive up to the Rust family farm and ask if they could camp or fish and swim. Old man Rust sometimes would let them camp if they paid him.

As a young boy Adolph would go to fetch water from the Honey Creek Spring. Before their water well was drilled they would make wooden barrels, put them on their horse drawn wagon and follow a trail from their house down to the spring. The family would sometimes spend the day picnicking and swimming at the spring, then fill up the barrels to bring back home for the family and the animals.

"The rock walls that cross the country side," said Mr. Scheel, "were not built to keep animals in, but to keep them out! At that time there were no fences and all the livestock roamed free. If you had a crop that you wanted to protect you had to put up a fence around it. That is why the walls were built. There were no fences between neighbors, you just crossed over fields and through the woods to go to each others houses."

When I asked him if they went into San Antonio

very often he said, "Why, no, because they didn't speak German in San Antonio, that's why we always went to New Braunfels, because we couldn't speak English."

Bergheim Store just down Hwy 46 From the park also has a connection to Honey Creek. Andreas Engel, an orphaned boy in Germany, immigrated to this area at the age of 21. He and his wife were the first to be married at the Honey Creek Church on the Kunz property. In 1887 Andreas and his brother opened a cotton gin, a corn mill and eventually a general store. In 1901 he opened the Bergheim Post Office, which is still in operation today. His great granddaughter Bernadine Cobb was Post Master from 1967 to 1974, The post office and general store are still run by Andreas Engel's descendants and used by many park visitors.

The history of the hill country and the Guadalupe River Valley is rich, colorful and closely tied together with Guadalupe River State Park. It should be captured in documents and photographs and put on display so future generations may develop an appreciation for what life was like in this area for the very first settlers. Who in fact was more closely tied to the land and nature than the farmers who struggled and thrived on this sometimes harsh land.


Rust House Restorations

by Dave Kibler

The ongoing project to restore the historic Rust House, described in the last issue, continues to gather speed. The next logical step will be to complete during the summer of 2006 the repair carpentry required to restore the integrity of both porches and several other areas of the exterior which have deteriorated over the years since the house was erected nearly ninety years ago.

A bid for the work on the part of a knowledgeable and skilled restoration carpenter has been received and is under consideration by the Friends board. Approval is expected within the next month, and this will allow time to complete the work in the third quarter 2006. The Friends will fund this carpentry project.

The final stage in the restoration of the exterior will be the complete repainting and re-calking of the house, planned for the cooler weather of the fall of 2006. Volunteers interested in helping with this fall portion of the project may contact Dave Kibler(830-336-3718) or the park superintendent. Of course, monetary contributions will be welcomed.



Saturday Evening Programs

**June 17**

Fireflies All you have wondered about fireflies. We will be talking about America's favorite insect (Gallop Poll). We will talk about their life cycle, why and how they glow and blink, and in the end take a short firefly spotting hike to identify fireflies in the field.

Ernie Lee

Texas Master Naturalist

**June 24**

Using Native Plants in Landscaping Residents of the Texas Hill Country have a dilemma. How can I have a nice, beautiful landscape but not have to use so much of the limited water supply to keep the landscape healthy. There is an answer to this question and the homeowner doesn't have to use rock and cactus for landscaping. There are many native species of plants that are both attractive and yet do not require loads of water that many other plants require in our landscapes. Come learn of how you can have an attractive landscape using native plants as well as save the precious natural resource that is so important to everyone - water.

Jay Kingston

Kendall County Extension Agent

**July 1**

To be announced

**July 8****Tracking****Camilla Ritchey****July 15**

Stories from the History of the Local Area The people and history of the area surrounding the park, the boot-legging days and some of the customs of the old timers, John Eddie Vogt was born in a frame house next to the fire station on Main Street in Boerne and has lived within two miles of his birthplace all of his life.

John Eddie Vogt

Lifetime Boerne resident and father of Kendall county judge

**July 22**

Fly Fishing (starts earlier at 7:00 PM) The how and why of fly fishing along with a practical demonstration.

Ann Thompson**July 29**

Hill Country Cactus Lots of information about cactus, types and kinds of cactus for the Hill Country, Layman's approach to successful cactus gardening in the Texas Hill Country

San Antonio Cactus and Xeorphyte Society, Texas Association of Cactus and Succulents Society, Native Plant Society of Texas

**August 7**

To be announced

**August 12****Reptiles or Quails****Robert Perez****August 19****Bats**

Rollo Newsom Spokes person at the "Old Bat Tunnel"

**October 28**

Astronomy Club Star Night Come join us as we gaze at the heavens using high powered telescopes and identify celestial bodies.

Don Baker

**Friends of Guadalupe River
and Honey Creek, Inc.**

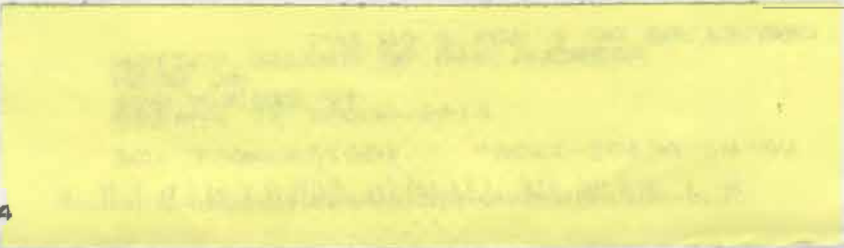
3350 Park Road 31
Spring Branch, Texas 78070

SAN ANTONIO

TX 782 2 T
14 JUN 2005 PM



We're on the web!
www.honeycreekfriends.com



78254+6097
78005@3914

*The Friends of Guadalupe River and
Honey Creek, Inc. is a non-profit
organization working with Guadalupe
River State Park and Honey Creek
State Natural Area.*

*The "Friends" meet monthly at the
Park. Please join us on the third
Thursday at 7:00 pm.
And bring a friend!*