

Friends of Guadalupe River & Honey Creek, Inc.

A Non-profit Organization

President's Letter

By Wilt Shaw

Farewell—But I'll Still Be Here

My tenure as president has finally come to an end having served two fruitful (I hope) fun-filled years. Thanks to the most supportive staff one could possibly wish for, we achieved a lot.

To name a few endeavors: The Honey Creek trails are under constant care and the Rust House is completely restored, thanks to the hustle and leadership of Dave Kibler; along with the development of an Interpretive Master Plan, additional skilled guides—thanks to superior preparation, instruction and implementation by Tom Anderson—will soon be ready to staff the Honey Creek trails; the Saturday night programs—I cannot thank Nancy Gray enough—are better than ever; our website is stunning and informative, thanks to web master, Dan Freeman; our newsletter just keeps getting better (thank you Terry Urbanczyk); for the work done on the new north side Bauer Unit by the Urbanczyk family we are ever so grateful; the 3rd grade education program continues to be a great source of learning thanks to Holly Camero; thanks to a whole host of folks for allowing our Halloween event to just keep getting better.

I cannot list our great historian “find” as an accomplishment. In the short time he has been on board, Bryden Moon has done more to advance our knowledge of the history of the park area than all the past efforts combined. (Bryden, we are awaiting the book!) JW Pieper, our treasurer, does so much more than just keep books. He continues to support every aspect of the Friends through sound advice and action. Tom Anderson, the original Friend of the Park, is our consummate sage and guru. We are all so thankful for his guidance.

Your new president effective January 1, 2008, will be Nancy Gray. I have gotten to know Nancy and Bob over the last few years and I can tell you we are in great hands. She did such a great job with our Saturday night educational programs, so I know she will continue to do so as our president.

We also are blessed to have a new, enthusiastic Texas Parks and Wildlife Interpreter, Craig Hensley, who has hit the ground running! His plethora of new programs will bring new life to the park and to Honey Creek SNA. Be sure to read Craig's introductory article, *Challenges and Opportunities* in this issue.

I cannot imagine wandering off too far from the Friends and the park. I plan to remain a board member to serve as best I can.

If you wish to become more active as a Friend of the park, feel free to contact me, one of the board members, or park headquarters. Mark and his hard-working staff have the park in the best shape it has seen in years I know you don't what to miss out!

Board of Directors

President

Nancy Gray
830-229-5376
grayabbott@aol.com

Vice-President/Ed. Programs

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

Secretary/Newsletter

Terry Urbanczyk
210-912-4902
rturban5@gmail.com

Treasurer

JW Pieper
830-336-3241
jwp1@gvtc.com

Director/Maintenance

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

Director/ Web Master

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

Director/ Historian

Bryden Moon
830-336-3375
Bemoonjr@aol.com

Director

Tom Anderson
210-653-5225

Director/Past President

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

Challenges and Opportunities

By Craig Hensley

I have now been with GRSP/HCSNA for five or so weeks and as excited as I was on the first day I can honestly say I am even more excited about being here now. It has been a bit of a whirlwind for me however I have always enjoyed a good breeze so I feel right at home. As I have been going through the process of settling in I have taken the time to doing a bit of self-brainstorming in terms of what might be possible in terms of programs as well as volunteer- and resource-wise. These ruminations of mine have led me to the conclusion that there are both challenges yet incredible possibilities not only for the park and natural area, but for the people we serve and for the Friends and other volunteers. Let's begin with programs.

Programmatically the Friends group has carried the ball wonderfully well as reflected in the number of programs that have occurred on Saturday evenings, the Saturday morning walks, the 3rd grade programs, and events like the just concluded and very successful Halloween in the Park. There has been a wonderful diversity of programs offered at the amphitheatre and having attended a Saturday morning walk, a great deal of knowledge and a passion for the natural area has been shared with a great number of visitors.

The challenge as I see it is that there hasn't been a staff person in a position to dedicate a significant amount of time to programming in some time. This has placed a lot of pressure on the Friends group and it has responded. Now that the Interpreter position has been filled, there arises the opportunity not only for more direct staff involvement with the Friends in terms of support of existing programs, but the opportunity for the expansion and further diversification of programs.

Not long ago I shared a list of program ideas with Mark, Robert and the Friends Board. As I see it, we have the opportunity to dramatically increase the diversity of programming at the park and natural area. I see a day where teacher training workshops in Leopold Education Project (there are four people that I know of, two each from the Lindheimer and Alamo Chapters of Master Naturalists that are trained facilitators, and I plan to become one, as well, sooner than later, by the way – anyone want to join me?), Project WILD, WET, and Flying WILD (I am a certified trainer for this great program) are held routinely at the park and natural area, led by trained Friends volunteers and park staff. I see a day when natural history workshops on a variety of topics are held not only for campers but for members of the local communities. I see a day when an annual festival to celebrate birds, butterflies and water/river resources. And, as I see it, these are only the tip of the proverbial iceberg (I haven't even mentioned the cultural resource interpretation that can be done – oops, consider it mentioned!).

In terms of resource management, I see a day when we have community volunteers assisting with a variety of citizen science/research-based activities throughout the park and natural area. Where volunteers routinely monitor nest success of bluebirds along established and maintained bluebird trails, where renewed efforts to monitor golden-cheeked warblers is on-going, as is monitoring of amphibians, butterflies and more. Currently efforts are underway through San Antonio Audubon to survey birds on Honey Creek and a Texas Watch station is monitored each month on the Guadalupe. Both of these efforts can be expanded.

For me, the bottom line is that by increasing opportunities for involvement in resource management and stewardship, we can increase our visitors' awareness and appreciation for not only the natural world in general, but for Honey Creek and the state park specifically.

The real key to this effort though is volunteer support. That is perhaps our most immediate and daunting challenge and yet our greatest opportunity. Too few people right now are doing too much. We face the real possibility of burn out and quite frankly, I would say the loss of even one of our currently active Friends members is a great blow to what we already have in place not to mention what I have outlined above. Therefore in the capacity of Volunteer Coordinator that is a part of my job, I am going to make a great effort to increase not only the number of volunteers but the activity of those volunteers.

I was given a mandate to increase volunteer numbers by 10% a year. If I base this on the current roster of "active" volunteers, I would only need to add 1 or 2 individuals. This simply isn't good enough. So what I intend to do is increase the number of truly active Friends volunteers to 20 people by the end of the fiscal year 2008. That will nearly double the number of active volunteers we currently have. This will help reduce the load on each of the current volunteer and further diversify our base of knowledge and skills more individuals will bring to the table. This will be a good thing.

Some of you reading this may have your doubts; I don't. I hope those of you that are current Friends members but inactive other than your annual fee contribution will re-examine your commitment to the Friends group and over the next few months join us in the capacity of becoming more active, whether it is in the area of resource management or education. Consider attending one of the monthly volunteer training meetings I will be hosting on a monthly basis beginning in January. Give me a call and let's visit.

What I have outlined above may seem to be a challenging endeavor – it is. However, I am up for the challenges for I believe in the possibilities. Join with myself, our active Friends members and the rest of the staff of the state park and natural area and together we will move this facility even farther ahead than where we are now.

Feel free to contact me via email at craig.hensley@tpwd.state.tx.us or by calling my office at 830.438.7653. I hope to see you soon!

Interpretive Guide Training

By Craig Hensley

Saturday, November 10, the Friends and TPWD conducted its Guide Training for the Honey Creek Trail. The training took place at the Interpretive Center of GRSP. We trained 12 new guides and 2 refreshers. After a welcome by Craig Hensley, GRSP/HCSNA's Interpretive Specialist, Chris Holmes, Regional Interpretive Specialist, began the program with an explanation of what Interpretation is and is not. This was followed by the trainees learning about the resource. The following Friends members presented, Wilt Shaw (Geology/Water), Bob Gray (Water), Nancy Gray, Wilt, and Craig (Flora and Wildlife Diversity), Bryden Moon (Heritage) and Craig finishing up with Stewardship. We broke for lunch and after lunch Chris put it all together. He discussed goals, objectives, and strategies of leading an interpretive walk. He concluded by stressing the theme: Spring fed water is the common thread that sews together the many stories at Honey Creek. Tom Anderson then led most of the trainees on the first Honey Creek walk. At the conclusion Chris led a critique of the walk. Lea Anzalotta, one of the participants has been assisting with walks for some time and she received her Interpretive Guide Patch certifying her as a guide. The other trainees will need to complete two more walks to receive their certification. We welcome the following Friends and Guides to be; Eva Fromme, Stephen Gose, Lea Gose, Bud Lindsay, Nalga Mebane, Paul Mebane, Carol Miller, Knox Miller, Lee Morris, Ann Tubbs, and Kristin Urbanczyk. Certified Guides Cindy and David Sims also attended the training.

You also can become a guide to Honey Creek, one of the beautiful pristine places in Texas. If you are interested contact Craig Hensley at GRSP and he will add you to the list for the next training. While waiting for that training come along with present guides and enjoy the many wonders of Honey Creek SNA.

Craig Hensley contact information: 830-438-7653

craig.hensley@tpwd.state.tx.us



December Programs at Guadalupe River State Park

Saturday, December 8: **Night Hike**, 6:30-7:30 and 7:30-8:30 p.m. – a walk along the river to enjoy the natural world at night; meet at Interpretive Center.

Sunday, December 16: **Bird Walk and Talk**, 8:30-10:30 a.m. - a bird walk at Honey Creek; meet at Headquarters parking lot.

Saturday, December 22: **(Nearly) Full Moon Walk**, 6:30-7:30 p.m. & 7:30-8:30 p.m. – a hike along the river under the nearly full moon with moon lore and listening for animal life; meet at the Interpretive Center.

Sunday, December 23: **Bird Walk and Talk**, 8:30-10:30 a.m. – as above.

Saturday, December 29: **Prowlin' for Owls**, 7-9 p.m. – presentation on owls followed by hike to call for them in Honey Creek; program begins at Amphitheatre.

Sunday, December 30: **Bird Walk and Talk**, 8:30-10:30 a.m. – as above.

Upcoming Workshops and Training at Guadalupe River State Park & Honey Creek State Natural Area

Saturday, December 15: Making of a Naturalist: Here a Sparrow, There a Sparrow!

1-4:30 p.m. – a workshop on winter sparrows with bird hike at Honey Creek. Meet at the Interpretive Center. Join Park Interpreter Craig Hensley for an in-depth look at winter sparrows that make the Hill Country home at this time of year. Following a 20-minute presentation, we'll head out to the fields of Honey Creek State Natural Area for to search for sparrows from spotted towhees to white-crowned, savannah and field sparrows, and more. You'll learn tips and tricks to identifying these sometimes confusing "little brown jobs" and, if fortunate, may see a few up close and personal. Be sure to bring binoculars and a bird field guide. Seating is limited to 15 people. Call 830.438.7653 or email Craig at craig.hensley@tpwd.state.tx.us to reserve a spot.

Saturday, December 15: Stories in the Stars

6:30-8 p.m. – Audience participation story-telling followed by stargazing in front of the Interpretive Center; meet at Amphitheatre. This training session will provide Friends members and new volunteer candidates the opportunity to begin to learn the basics of the night sky. Park Interpreter Craig Hensley will teach guide participants through the night sky. You'll learn how to recognize a planet from a star, identify features on the moon, and identify the winter constellations. The evening will include viewing a variety of deep sky objects through a telescope provided courtesy of Old Tunnel Wildlife Management Area.

In the event of cloudy weather, the training will be rescheduled for Thursday, January 17.

Saturday, February 16, 1-5 p.m: Friends of GRSP & HCSNA Training: Winter Birds of Honey Creek

Meet at the Interpretive Center

Led by Park Interpreter Craig Hensley, this session will be conducted primarily along the trails of Honey Creek SNA in search of the birds that call the area home during the winter. Participants will learn the basics of bird identification and then apply what has been learned in the field.

Participants will also be introduced to the science of bird banding and learn about the opportunities to help GRSP staff and Friends during the year as they monitor bird populations throughout the 4,000+ acres.

Saturday, March 8, 9 a.m.-4 p.m. Project WILD Training (Tentative)

Interpretive Center at GRSP

Texas Parks and Wildlife Department sponsors a suite of Project WILD programs, each offering a special iteration of this outstanding, hands-on approach to learning. Project WILD is a Kindergarten through 12th grade environmental and conservation education program emphasizing awareness, appreciation and understanding of wildlife and natural resources. It is interdisciplinary and supplementary and can be used to teach basic skills in science, social studies, language arts, math, art, music and physical education. This workshop will be offered to any educator interested in bringing this time-tested and valuable program to their students. Seating is limited to 15 people. Call 830.438.7653 or email Craig at craig.hensley@tpwd.state.tx.us to reserve a spot. A park entrance fee of \$6 per adult (free with a State Park Pass) and a workshop fee of \$5 can be paid at the Headquarters gate upon arrival.

Tuesday, March 25, 8 a.m.-5 p.m. Friends Field Trip: Enchanted Rock SNA

Meet at Headquarters

Let's go on the road and visit one of the Hill Country's most beautiful destinations (besides ours, of course!), Enchanted Rock. We'll meet at the headquarters parking lot at 8 a.m. and carpool to Enchanted Rock where we'll hike to the top of the granite dome and explore the wonders of the area. Bring a sack lunch, water, snacks and be sure to wear hiking shoes, hat and dress appropriately for the weather. Binoculars are a must too, if you have them.

Please call Craig at 830.438.7653 or email him at craig.hensley@tpwd.state.tx.us to let him know if you are planning on attending and if you would be willing to drive.

Thursday, April 17, 9 a.m.-3 p.m. Protecting Cultural Resources Training

Regional Cultural Resources Specialist Diane Dismukes will provide this six-hour training on the care, documentation and treatment of cultural resources found in Guadalupe River SP and Honey Creek SNA. This workshop will include outdoor time and is a must for Friends volunteers and staff persons interested in protecting our cultural resources.

Please call Craig at 830.438.7653 or email at craig.hensley@tpwd.state.tx.us to let him know you are attending..

Saturday, April 19 & May 24, 1-4 p.m. Making of a Naturalist: Wildflowers of the Texas Hill Country

Meet at the Interpretive Center at GRSP

Join Park Interpreter Craig Hensley for this half-day workshop on the identification and natural history of the wildflowers that grow so profusely in the Texas Hill Country. Attendees will learn identification tips and tricks as well as where to find them and which ones are good for use in home naturoscapes.

This special workshop will include both an indoor component and a walk along the trails of Honey Creek State Natural Area in search of flowering plants.

Seating is limited to 20 people. Call 830.438.7653 or email Craig at craig.hensley@tpwd.state.tx.us to reserve a spot.

A park entrance fee of \$6 per adult (free with a State Park Pass) and a workshop fee of \$10 can be paid at the Headquarters gate upon arrival.

Saturday, April 5 & May 17, 1-4 p.m. Making of a Naturalist: Butterflies of the Hill Country

Meet at the Interpretive Center at GRSP

Join Park Interpreter Craig Hensley for an afternoon of gossamer-winged wonders as we look into the world of butterflies. Participants will learn about the natural history and identification of butterflies found in our area, what kinds of plants can be used to attract them, and then head outdoors in search of them. This workshop is designed for ages 16 and up.

Seating is limited to 20 people. Call 830.438.7653 or email Craig at craig.hensley@tpwd.state.tx.us to reserve a spot.

A park entrance fee of \$6 per adult (free with a State Park Pass) and a workshop fee of \$10 can be paid at the Headquarters gate upon arrival.

Tuesday, May 20, 9 a.m.-Noon Friends of GRSP & HCSNA Training: River Ecology

Meet at Interpretive Center at GRSP

The Guadalupe River is the "ribbon of life" through the state park and natural area. Join us for an in-depth look at the nature of the river, from the plants and animals that call its water and banks home to the factors that influence the quality of water and life in and around the river. Dress to get wet!

Saturday, June 21, 1-5 p.m. Friends of GRSP & HCSNA Training: Butterflies of Guadalupe River, Honey Creek

Meet at the Interpretive Center at GRSP

A plethora of gossamer-winged wonders can be found throughout the park and natural area. Led by Park Interpreter Craig Hensley, participants will gain an in-depth understanding of butterfly ecology from basic life history to their many adaptations. We'll then head outdoors in search of them, learning identification tips in preparation for the 1st annual NABA butterfly count to take place in July in and around the park and natural area (see below).

Saturday, July 12, 8 a.m.-5 p.m. Guadalupe River/Honey Creek Butterfly Count

Meet at the Interpretive Center at GRSP

Join us for our first annual butterfly count! We'll meet at the state park and survey the 4,000+ acres and surrounding area to count butterflies as part of a nation-wide effort to monitor populations of these environmentally sensitive creatures. A brief identification primer will begin the day and then we'll break into teams and take to the trails.

Whether you are a novice or expert, we need you! To sign up for this day of great fun and learning, call 830.438.7653 or email craig.hensley@tpwd.state.tx.us. Each participant will need to pay the \$6 park entry fee (children under 12 are free) plus a \$3 fee for participation in the count – this goes to the North American Butterfly Association for publishing the results.

Trails to the Past

by Bryden Moon

Homesteaders Homecoming Snapshots

Slowly, as the names were read off, our guests' hands went up.....Heinrich Acker..... Sebastian Beierle.... Jacob Bergmann.... Friedrich Gass.....

These were the patriarchs of the pioneering ranchers and farmers' families of our area, and by raising their hands our guests were signifying that were tied historically and genealogically to these pioneers.

Dietrich Knibbe.... Conrad Krause....Heinrich Richter....

Friedrich Rust.....Hans Von Specht.... Carl Wehe.....Friedrich Wehe.....Heinrich Wehe....Carl Weidner.



And as the last hand was raised, we were well on our way into the second annual Homesteaders Homecoming, hosted by our Friends Group on September 22nd down at the Park's amphitheater. Our guests with names linked to historical sites and roads, included authors, historians, curators of family

history and land, and most importantly, descendants of local pioneers. Our participants were unique in that they could not only shed light on a common past lived over three generations ago, but in their role as heirs and caretakers, they could bridge us even further back with photos, documents and tales - five generations back to the very first days of colonization in this part of Texas.



Helen Weidner



Susie & Pedro Duron



Hilmar & Barbara Wehe



Brenda Anderson Lindemann

Childhood remembrances of dinners long ago: bread, sweetbread and dried sausage slices. Community support: assisting one another at harvests and emergencies. Historical events: the fire at the Weidner Ranch barn and murders on the back roads. Sweet rice. The coded meaning of the number of rings of the party line phone: eight for a fire, six for the death of a community member. Trips to the store: only once a month. Implements from the past: horse-driven molasses press. Family support at harvest: meals of heavenly design. No secrets on a party line. Spring Branch School. Critters artwork: stumps chewed into points. A prized commodity: black walnut trees. Mission churches in Spring Branch and Twin Sisters. Freighting stations and wagon-worn ruts in a creek bed.



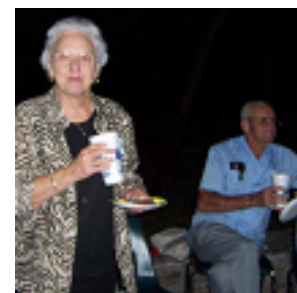
Corrine Zunker



Gloria Voges & Violet Wolfshohl

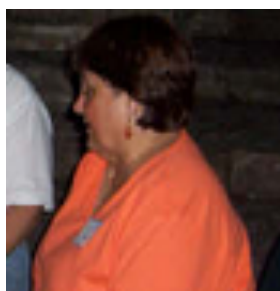


Carmen Rittiman



Doris & Clinton Acker

Stories and artifacts were shared; photos displayed, heart-felt experiences and lore were related and names were dropped: **Acker** Road, **Rittiman** Road, **Specht's** Crossing, Opa **Rust's** house, **Weidner** Ranch, **Doeppenschmidt** gravesite, **Adolph Scheel**, Family lunches at the **Honey Creek**, **Engel's** Store, **Kriegner** Cemetery, **Bergmann** Cemetery, "**Orphans on the Guadalupe**", **St. Joseph of Honey Creek** Cemetery, Fathers **Dressel** and **Whalen**, **Jones** Mill, preemption land deeds signed by **Sam Houston**.



Olivia Clements



Terry Urbanczyk & Robert Trimyer



Sherri Wolfshohl

This year's newcomers were: Doris & Clinton Acker, Susie & Pedro Duron, Olivia Clements, Helen Weidner, Gloria Voges, and Violet Wolfshohl.

Susie & Olivia's Grandfather, Jesus Martinez, whose family was profiled in our last edition, came to the area in the early 1900's to work on ranches as a hired hand. Gloria and Violet grew up on the Weidner Ranch, which makes up part of Honey Creek State Natural Area, and as kids visited their Grandparents and Aunt & Uncle at their homes in what is now Guadalupe State Park. Their Opa was Henry Rust....owners of our gathering point....the Rust House.

As time flew by and the sun set, everyone continued to share with a black canopy overhead. They were sharing, just as their forebears coordinated tasks, "with everyone pitching in." With sweet stories and even sweeter desserts, the evening passed away much too soon.....I felt like we had just started. All agreed



that another gathering of homesteading families should be held again, **even sooner than the annual tag implies.**

Our Friend's group would like to capture and display the colorful rainbow of our area's heritage and as such we hope someday to use portions of the Rust house to showcase photos, stories, families, historical documents and even artifacts. With this second Homesteaders Homecoming, we are taking our first baby steps to gather the richness of the past for today and for generations to come. Thanks to Sherri Wolfshohl for videotaping our gathering.

Membership Renewal

Due January 1st

Friends of Guadalupe River/Honey Creek, Inc. Membership

(Membership Renewal date is January 1st)

Name(s): _____ Date _____
Address: _____ City, State, Zip: _____
Email _____ Phone: _____

Membership Type: _____ New Member _____ Renewal _____ Change of Address
Level of Membership: _____ \$5 Education or Youth Organization _____ \$50 Sustaining Member
_____ \$5 Student (under 18) _____ \$100 Contributing Member
_____ \$10 Individual (over 18) _____ \$500 Corporate Partner
_____ \$15 Family _____ \$1000 Life Membership

I would like to help the Friends by volunteering for:

_____ Interpretive hikes _____ Outdoor Ed. Programs _____ Trail Maintenance
_____ Historical Drama _____ Evening Programs _____ South Island Beautification
_____ Trail Ride Event _____ Fundraising _____ Other _____

Send checks payable to "Friends of GR/HC, Inc. Mail to: 3350 Park Road 31, Spring Branch, TX 78070
Friends of Guadalupe River/Honey Creek, Inc. is a 501(c)3 organization.
All donations are tax deductible.

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

3350 Park Road 31

Spring Branch, Texas 78070

*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 second Thursday
At 7:00 pm,
And bring a friend!*