



SPRING 2010 NEWSLETTER

Friends of Guadalupe River, Honey Creek, Inc.

A non-profit organization

President's Letter

by Tom Anderson

Many things have changed since I last wrote a President's letter. I would like to start my term by thanking those that have helped make these changes. The three Past Presidents (JW Pieper, Wilt Shaw, and Nancy Gray) who each served 2 years leading our organization. The park increased its number of users and the Friends increased its programs, its donations as well as its volunteer hours during these 6 years. Also big thanks to the Board which provided many hours of leadership and work. We have seen park staff change also. The park staff has grown during this time. We now have 2 park police officers and a full time Interpreter. The new park interpreter is Chris Dooley. He comes to us from Enchanted Rock SP. We are fortunate that the past interpreter, Craig Hensley, is in the area and continuing to provide programs on a volunteer basis. Our board has grown also. We have been fortunate to add Bryden Moon our Historian who has spent many hours learning about our area. He and Terry Urbanczyk began a Homecoming event that has brought an additional program to the park. He also enlightens us with information in the Newsletter about the German Immigration into the hill country. Look for his article and info about the Homecoming event coming in April. David Kibler has taken on the additional position of Vice-president along with being the Director of Maintenance. David works closely with Greg Nash of the park staff in helping young men develop Eagle Scout projects. The latest addition to our board is Bruce Jones the Director for the Wildlife Viewing Area. Bob Gray who has helped with many projects at the park has agreed to be our Secretary. Nancy Gray our most recent past president is still in charge of Saturday evening presentations at the amphitheater and additionally she is in charge of the Honey Creek guides. Holly Camero has added special projects (Halloween Event!) to her duties with educational programs. Dan Freeman continues to be our webmaster. Wilt Shaw is listed as a Director at Large which really means he does many things. He is in charge of our data base and at present he is coordinating the landscaping at the Rust House. JW Pieper continues to be our Treasurer as well as helping with many other projects. Terry Urbanczyk has been in charge of our excellent newsletter. I am sad to say Terry has turned in her resignation as of the completion of this newsletter. Terry and Ronnie have given much to the park in time, talent, and donations. They will truly be missed. I am still hopeful they will be active in the future. If any of our membership has the knowledge of putting together newsletters and would consider helping with this please let me know. Terry has agreed to teach if needed anyone with a computer how to do this. I would also like to thank the park staff. Joan Nitschke and her staff at headquarters, Greg Nash and his staff in maintenance, and Scott Taylor and Aaron Anderegg in management for helping the Friends feel a vital part of these great parks. It brings me to the last person that needs a big THANKS that being Mark Abolafia-Rosenzweig who came to the park with a vision of making the Friends organization the best in the park system. We are on that path and we can use many more volunteers like the ones mentioned above. If you are not a member please join, if you are and not active help us by becoming active in any or many of our programs.

Board of Directors

President

Tom Anderson
tanderson46@satx.rr.com

Vice Pres./Maintenance

Dave Kibler
djki@gvtc.com

Secretary

Bob Gray
RGrayTX@gmail.com

Treasurer

J.W.Pieper
jwpl@gvtc.com

Director/Newsletter

Terry Urbanczyk
rturban5@gmail.com

Director/Sat. Programs/Hikes

Nancy Gray
grayabbott@aol.com

Director /Education

Holly Camero
chcamero@aol.com

Director/Historian

Bryden Moon
Bemoonjr@aol.com

Director/Webmaster

Dan Freeman
alyeskia@yahoo.com

Director Wildlife Viewing

Bruce Jones
clplbg@gvtc.com

Director at Large

Wilt Shaw
wshawjr888@aol.com

Discovery Center Opens

by Tom Anderson

The Discovery Center has had a soft opening and has made a positive addition to our park! We opened in November 7th of 2009 and have been open each weekend since. The numbers speak to the success of this center. We have had over 1050 children and adults come in and visit the center. These are the months when the park is least used and this year we had a very wet and cold winter. If this is any indication of the numbers we can expect during spring, summer, and fall the Discovery Center will be one of the neat places in the Texas Parks and Wildlife to visit. We are open from 9-5 Saturday and Sunday. We will be open during the week of Spring Break hours to be determined by the staff. This does not happen without many volunteer hours. In the first 4 months we logged over 425 volunteer hours. The Friends of Guadalupe River SP/Honey Creek SNA thank the many individuals that make this happen. The goal of the Discovery Center is to have the park visitors come in and arouse their interest in nature and then go into the park and discover. One of many examples of this happened the last Saturday in February when Chris Dooley, park interpreter, and Laurie Espil-Goode, Friends volunteer, interacted with a young lady and her mother in the Discovery Center. She found the critter tracks molds in the center interesting and then went into the park and took pictures of tracks she found. I received the following email from her mother with pictures also on this page.

Hi Tom, We were told by Laurie in the Guadalupe River discovery center to email you the photos that my 10yr. old daughter Krista Winter took of the possible mountain lion prints she found. I've also included some photos of the other prints she found. She had a great time, and Laurie is amazing and a wonderful valuable member of your staff. She took the time to answer all of my daughter's questions and was just as excited about all of it as my 10 year old. We will definitely be back.

Thanks! Keele Winter



This example is proof that the Discovery Center can make a real difference in children's experiences while at the park. I would like to thank Chris and Laurie for making Krista's time at the park memorable. I also want to thank Mrs. Winter for sharing this with us.

**The Grand Opening
of the Discovery Center is
April 24th 9-4.**

***Come join in the many activities,
special hikes and displays and free hot dogs!!!***





Park Happenings

by Chris Dooley

Howdy! This is my first entry in this newsletter as the Interpreter/Resource Specialist/Volunteer Coordinator here at GRSP/HCSNA. I'd like to thank everyone for the warm welcome and all the help you've given me while I got settled in.

Spring Break is upon us, and with it another busy season begins. The Park is expanding our office hours again, and we are preparing for another massive influx of visitors. We are in the process of getting seasonal workers/interns to help us with the added workload, and we look forward to another productive Spring and Summer. We are also planning on having the Discovery Center Open 7 days a week during Spring Break, and we are looking at the feasibility of opening the Discovery Center during certain weekdays in the summer.

While we're on the subject, the Discovery Center is starting to see increasing visitation as the weather warms up. So far the feedback has been overwhelmingly positive, and our target audience (kids) seem to always be able to find something to hold their interest, and even the adult visitors appear to enjoy the experience. We are still working out the kinks in the backpack -lending process, but we should be able to start lending them out by Easter.

Elsewhere in the park, we have begun a cedar eradication project on 86 acres near the headquarters. We have contracted with Raven Environmental, who have brought in Cedar Eaters to shred the large trees. This method allows for much faster and less labor-intensive clearing than we would see with hand tools, and we are spared the problems of having large piles of slash on the ground. Once the area is cleared and our plans are improved, we hope to burn that area to kill off any small cedars we missed.

Our Wildlife Viewing Area is also up and running. We currently have 4 or 5 feeders up, depending on how many the raccoons have broken into at any given time. The birds are picking up on it's location, so we should be getting more good bird sightings as visitation increases. We are currently working with the friends group on installing a rainwater catch system and a permanent water feature for the viewing area which should attract even more wildlife, especially in the upcoming hot weather.

We are also proud to announce that the Discovery Center Grand Opening will be held on April 24th from 9:30 to 3:30. We will have 18-20 education stations staffed with volunteers doing various activities, hikes, and talks. We're planning on having a thousand or so visitors for the Grand Opening, and I'd like to thank the Friends Group again for their assistance in planning this event.

Saturday Night Programs are also back under way, and we are happy to welcome back all our volunteers who help make these programs possible. Tom Anderson is back with a talk by on Mammals, Skins and Skulls on the 13th, followed by Doug Daghish with Plants and Animals of the Hill Country.

Check the Friend's Group website for further events.

www.honeycreekfriends.com

Trails to the Past

by Bryden Moon

Names from the Past

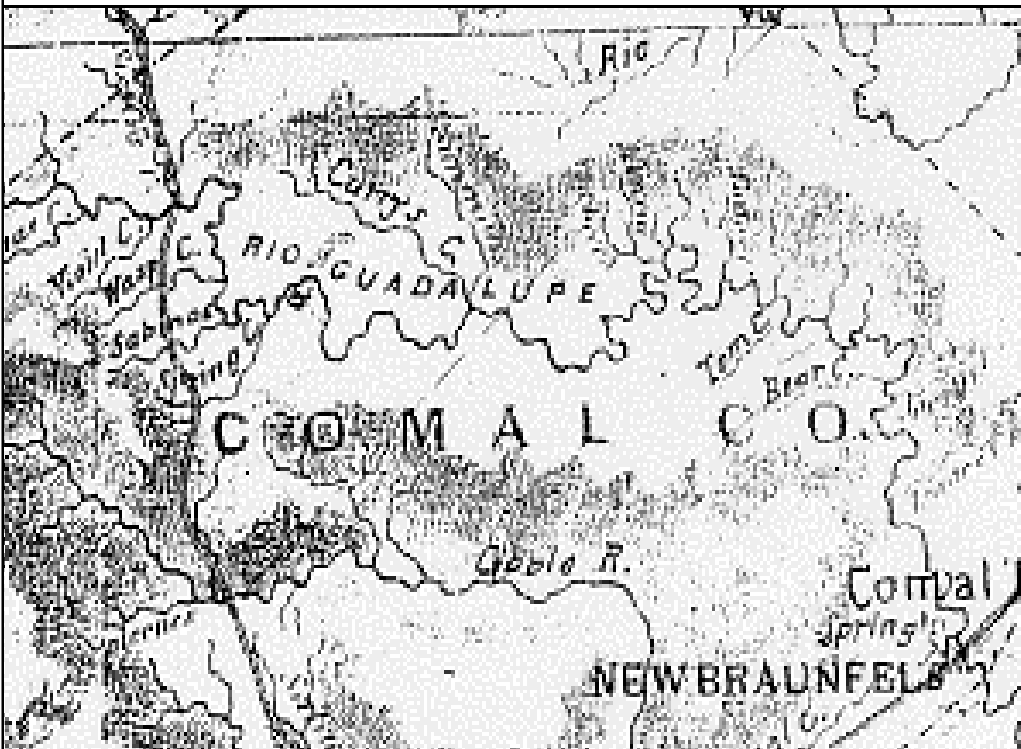
Many unique names dot the hills in our part of the world. Delving into the background of all the place-names is an interesting project. Each of these landmarks has a special story that deserves to be told in future articles. As such, today we'll not press forward on background research but simply ask: What is the oldest named geographical feature of our surrounding area?

As you think about this question, let's throw out some familiar names to stimulate thinking: **Acker** Road, **Anhalt**, **Bergheim**, **Bulverde**, **Comal** County, **Curry** Creek, **Edge** Falls Road, **Honey Creek**, **Kendalia**, **Kendall** County, **Spring Branch**, **Specht's** Crossing, and **Twin Sisters**. Are any missing?

Some of these geographical features from the above list utilized the name of a local pioneer for description. Others are linked to local water sources that came to define their area. The county names defined larger areas. As all are well-recognized locally, do you think any of these are the answer to today's question?

Remember that prior to German immigration with the Verein in 1844-1847, the lands in our area were not settled. So any date close to this era is pretty old locally.

Roads and Crossing Acker, Edge, and Specht were all original settlers with lands adjacent to their eponymous feature. The earliest documented settler of this grouping was Hans von Specht, who can be placed in the area in the early 1850s. Yet he did not move to the land with the crossing until after major floods in 1869/1870.



Communities

Curry Creek is the earliest of this bunch –

as the creek can be

located on an 1849 map by Jacob deCordova (see map right). Jim Patton settled on Curry Creek in 1847 (this regional name was supplanted by Kendalia after it was laid out). Anhalt (1859), Bergheim (1901), Bulverde (1852), Honey Creek (1860s), Kendalia (1883), Spring Branch (1852) and Twin-



Sisters (1856) are all community names, but were settled or designated a little later. So do think we named the oldest yet?

Counties - Comal County (see 1849 map prior page), which was created in **1846**, is the easy winner over Kendall County (1862). To this point we have exhausted our list and Comal County carries the earliest year. So is it the earliest? Not even close! And the amazing thing is that we have a very specific date for when the geographic feature was named – while we can only guess at some of the years listed above, we even have the day and month. Give up? There has been a bit of misdirection on my part. The answer is also on that 1849 map. It's our namesake, the largest and oldest defined pathway in the region – **the Guadalupe River**, whose route and name have never changed since the days of the Spanish empire.

As personal as our stretch of the Guadalupe River seems, the facts are that the naming event originated nearly 100 miles away, in a much earlier time. So early in fact, that the participants were not Texan, Texian, Mexican or even American. In 1689, Texas (1845), Mexico (1821), and of course even the United States (1776) had not been established. Spain had claimed this land but they had no formal outposts in Texas; the Spanish had not yet initiated the missionary system in Texas. A manhunt was underway, and the leader of this expedition, which included 85 well-armed Spanish soldiers, was the Governor of the Coahuila province, Alonso de León. They were looking for a foreign intruder, whom Spain had failed to find on nine prior inland and coastal forays into Texas. Their quarry was the Frenchman LaSalle and his settlement - Fort St. Louis. LaSalle had accidentally settled into Texas' Matagorda Bay on February 20, 1685. Now, only a few days before ultimately finding the small French enclave, Governor De León and his search party approached a large river in mid-afternoon and camped by it. **On April 14, 1689, the river was christened Nuestra Senora de Guadalupe** (Our Lady of Guadalupe).

What is not well known is that the river was actually renamed. Prior to this date it had two names: the French called it "La Rivière de la Magdeleine" and the Spanish, Río de Magdaline. For Texas a 1689 label is very old, thus making the Guadalupe River the oldest place-name in our region.

A Reminder!!

The 4th Annual

Honey Creek Homesteaders Homecoming

April 11, 2010 at 2:00 pm

To be held at St. Joseph's Honey Creek Catholic Church Hwy 46 West

In St. John's Hall, Lower Level



Saturday Evening Program Schedule

by Nancy Gray



6-Mar	Prowling for Owls, includes hike calling for owls	Craig Hensley
13-Mar	Mammals, Skins and Skulls (start at 7:00PM !)	Tom Anderson
20-Mar	Plants and Animals of the Hill Country	Doug Daghish
27-Mar	Flower Gardens Marine Sanctuary	John Prentice
3-Apr	Nightwatch, includes hike along river	Craig Hensley
10-Apr	San Antonio Astronomical Association Star Night	Don Baker
17-Apr	Whatever Happened to Horny Toads in Texas?	Rollo Newsom
24-Apr	Stories in the Stars, using park telescopes	Craig Hensley
1-May	Imperiled Texas Freshwater Mussels	John Prentice
8-May	Caves of Central Texas and Beyond	Kurt Meking
15-May	Mammals	Holly Camero
22-May	Nature's Pollinators	Susan Campbell
29-May	Turtles	Mark Klym
5-Jun	open	
12-Jun	open	
19-Jun	Geology of the Texas Hill Country	Bill Ward



Bird's Eye View

by Bruce Jones

Guadalupe River State Park now has an official "Wildlife Viewing Area" due to an **Eagle Scout Community Service Project!** The viewing booth is near the Discovery Center, accessible by a short trail from the same parking lot. Benches are onsite. No signage as yet but that is on the agenda for upgrades.

Several bird feeders have been installed and are currently visited by the local avifauna; Northern cardinals, Carolina chickadees, black-crested titmouse, chipping sparrows and Inca doves are just some of the species observed and they continue to exhaust the feed set out to lure them within the viewing area.

A water feature is to be added soon with the water coming from a rain water capture system. Please stop by and enjoy, relax and ponder the beauty of the native and migrating wildlife within our State Park.



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

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

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!