



**SUMMER 2010 NEWSLETTER**

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

**A non-profit organization**

**President's Letter**

by Tom Anderson

**Board of Directors**

Gifts are great to give and receive. I have come to realize that during my life the gifts that I gave or received that were not anticipated were the best. I will designate this president's article to some of the gifts that have been received by the Friends and those given by the Friends.

In November of 09 the Friends received a gift given by Amy Shelton McNutt Charitable Trust to help the Friends continue with their missions for the parks. A local ladies sorority Kappa Omega #5511 of Epsilon Sigma Alpha likewise gave us a donation to continue our work educating cultural as well as natural resources at the parks. A sister of a long time camper in the park has requested that those wanting to remember her brother give a donation to the Friends to be used at Guadalupe River State Park/Honey Creek State Natural Area. The Friends have received a donation from this request. The day the park celebrated Earth Day and the grand opening of the Discovery Center (see article and pictures in this issue) participants made donations to the Friends. Each week after the Honey Creek Hike donations are made by the hikers to help the Friends carry out projects in the parks. For the past 6 years individuals have made monetary donations to help us have an outstanding Halloween Party.

We also have had gifts of service: Twice each year scouts organize a river clean-up along the Guadalupe River. Local organizations donate time, decorations and candy so that trick or treating is safe and fun for the community at our Halloween Party. Eagle Scout projects have helped the park as well as develop skills that will assist these scouts for a lifetime. Out wildlife viewing area is the most recent project. Others have been building benches both in GRSP as well as HCSNA, and a watershed demonstration table. Friend volunteers have manned the Discovery Center beginning in November thru April have donated 627 hours. For the past 12 years the Friends in partnership with North East ISD, and the park have given 3<sup>rd</sup> grade students an experience in outdoor education using a curriculum (A Day of Observation) that was developed by the Friends and NEISD. Over 10,000 children have participated and hundreds of parents have visited the park for the first time.

There have been gifts of knowledge. Every Saturday evening March through October the Friends have organized interesting programs with speakers that have a particular specialty to share their knowledge with the campers in the park. The Friends provide a 9am Saturday morning hike into Honey Creek State Natural Area. These walks are led by Interpretative Guides that have been trained in the cultural, historical and natural resources of the area. We also provide special hikes for groups. The Friends will provide Wed. morning hikes during June-August. We are beginning to offer Birding Walks at posted times on Kiosks that were provided by the Friends.

With monies received the Friends have financed improvements such as; restoration of the Rust House, communication radios to assist with safety for visitors, the automatic gate at the entrance to the parks, purchasing, preparation and serving of food for special events, native plants at the traffic island at the entrance, and soon to be completed landscaping and limestone benches at the Rust House.

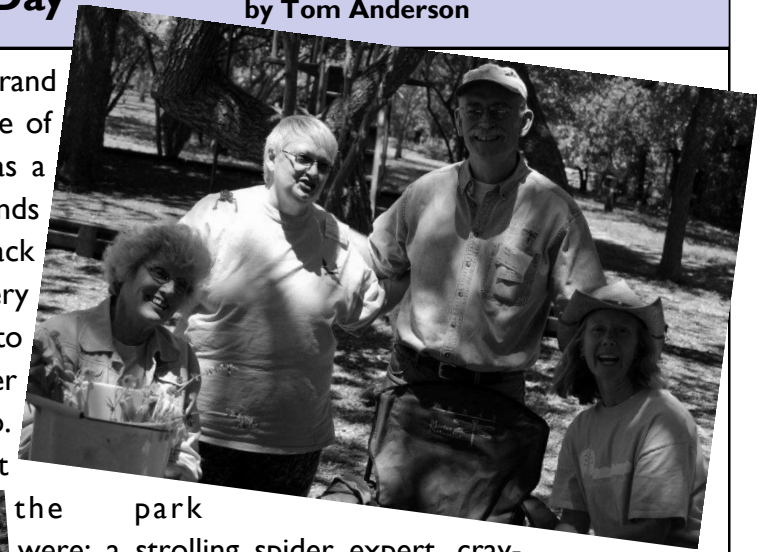
Do you have a gift you would like to share with the park? We can use any and all gifts whether they are donations of money, service or knowledge. One good way to do this is by filling out one of our membership applications in the newsletter, on line, or our new envelopes at headquarters, the Rust House, or at the Discovery Center. All donations received are used at our two great parks. The Friends of Guadalupe River State Park/Honey Creek State Natural Area is a non-profit organization. Please join us in making these the best parks they can be.

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## Discovery Center Opens on Earth Day

by Tom Anderson

Guadalupe River State Park celebrated The Official Grand Opening of the Discovery Center which has a theme of "Take a Closer Look" on Saturday April 24. It was a great day for the visitors to the park. The Friends played an integral part to the day by providing track walks, nature walks, volunteers manning the Discovery Center, and giving away hot dogs, and bottled water to the guest. The volunteers at the Discovery Center gave visitors magnified bug jars with the DC logo. Other popular activities that were spread throughout the day use area of



the park were: a strolling spider expert, crayfish displays, fishing, fossils and skulls, watershed box, bird banding, and a live reptile show-and-tell. There were 20 different learning stations staffed by TPWD biologists, archeologists, park volunteers, experts from such organizations as the Austin Gem and Mineral Society, Texas Natural Science Center, and Native Plant Society which gave out free wildflower seeds. There are nine concrete markers containing a different animal track have been placed in various spots in the park. The answers can be found by

looking inside a book located just outside the discovery center. As this center becomes known by the visitors to the park it will provide another reason to enjoy this great park. Children enter the Discovery Center crawling through the trunk of a "cypress tree" and the Discovery begins!



## Park Happenings

by Chris Dooley

It's been an exciting quarter here at Guadalupe River SP. The weather has been warming up nicely, the flowers are blooming, and we at the park are looking forward to another busy summer. All the rain of the past few months means that the river is looking great, which will definitely attract plenty of visitors. As usual, Bergheim Campground will be in the park renting tubes and bicycles as well as picking up kayakers who've floated down from upstream.

As those of you who've been in the park recently may have noticed, we have had a cedar clearing project ongoing by the Headquarters for the past few months. This project is wrapping up, with just over 180 acres of land cleared of most of the cedar. There have been a few hiccups along the way, but the results are impressive. The viewshed in that corner of the park has been vastly improved, and the land is much more open. Any friends who visit the park are encouraged to have a look at the results.

Our Saturday Night interpretive programs are going well, as expected. Attendance has been good so far, and we hope things will continue to pick up as summer comes on. We had to cancel one program due to flooding that closed the day use area, but the rest of programs have been a success. We are always looking for more volunteer presenters for Saturday night programs, so if you're interested please let us know. The park staff is also working on new hikes and other hands-on programs for the summer, so check the website for upcoming program dates and topics.

The park Staff would like to thank the Friends Group for all their help planning and conducting the grand opening of our Discovery Center. We had lots of presenters, a good crowd, and the weather couldn't have been better. More than 300 people visited the discovery center, and more than 20 presenters were on hand to see that everyone had a good time.

Texas Park and Wildlife has recently switched to a new software system for revenue collection and accounting. This new software, known as TexParks, promises to be more user-friendly and will automate many fiscal control procedures that, until now, have required many man hours to complete on a daily and weekly basis. There are still a few bugs to be worked out, of course, but overall we have been very impressed with the new system. For those Friends with Texas State Park Passes, please be aware that when you enter the park with you old pass you will need to turn it in and get a new swipe-able pass. This new pass will have the same expiration date as the old one, but will be compatible with the new system.

In relation to our new TexParks system, we are sad to announce that our longtime Park Manger, Mark Abolafia-Rosenzweig, will be leaving the park. Mark has been working full-time on the TexParks system for over a year, and since it has gone live he has accepted a new position administering the new system. We all wish Mark good fortune in his new job.

As always, we at the park cannot overstate how important the Friends Group is to our operations here. Much of what we've accomplished this quarter would have been impossible without the time and contributions put forth by you all. We thank you all for your continued involvement as we look forward to the summer.

## Trails to the Past

by Bryden Moon

### Linking Faces to the Past 4<sup>th</sup> Homesteader Homecoming



The eighty-eight year old St. John's Hall (1922) at St. Joseph Honey Creek Catholic Church, which served for many years as a dance hall and gathering place, once again came to life as the venue for our GR/HC Friends group's 4<sup>th</sup> Homesteader Homecoming. Descendants of our regional pioneers, listened, shared memories & stories, and displayed historical materials. We

learned

about links to the past settlers and settlements in our area – from Spring Branch to Bergheim, from Honey Creek to Curry Creek. During our Homesteader Homecoming we are always blessed to honor our early area settlers: those hardy individuals who came into the rugged wilderness and cared for their families and carved out livelihoods. While some of the local communities have withered in population or even faded from the maps, and some families have moved away, we are still able to experience a reunion of both the pioneers and the pioneers' families; whether through restored portraits or the very faces of our presenters, some



who had family roots in the area back as early as the 1850s. Old friends and new attended. Documents, photos, branding irons, & picture albums graced the tables. Connections were made. Numerous topics were discussed: the German immigration into the Hill Country,





the origins of the Honey Creek name, the development of St Joseph - Honey Creek Catholic Church, as well as the Mexican Revolution and the resulting immigration of Mexican-Nationals into the Rio Grande Valley, San Antonio and our region of the Hill Country. Distant relatives met for the first time, and non-related participants developed relationships.

Our Friends group, which actively supports our Homesteader Homecoming, was well represented (Tom Anderson, Holly Camero, Bruce & Honey Jones, Dave & Judy Kibler, Bryden & Kay Moon, J. W. & Jan Pieper, Wilt & Sylvia Shaw) and they, along with our park staff (Chris Dooley & Scott Taylor), helped to insure that this homecoming was once again a successful event.

An offer was put on the table by Joyce Gass Moore that next year's event be held at Honey Creek Headwaters Ranch. It is the site of many historic relics and will serve as a lovely setting for this event. Hope to see everyone at our 2011 Homesteader Homecoming.

***There are more stories  
to be told!!***

Some Photos Courtesy of Wilt  
Shaw Jr. (only the good ones!!)





# Saturday Evening Program Schedule

by Nancy Gray



5-Jun	Amazing Adaptations	Chris Dooley
12-Jun	Amazing Migration of Monarch Butterflies	Kip Kiphart
19-Jun	Geology of the Texas Hill Country	Bill Ward
26-Jun	Things That don't go bump in the Night	Craig Hensley
3-Jul	Use Your Head!	Chris Dooley
10-Jul	Whatever Happened to Horny Toads in Texas?	Rollo Newsom
17-Jul	Owls	Kim Hoskins
24-Jul	OPEN	
31-Jul	OPEN	
7-Aug	OPEN	
14-Aug	OPEN	
21-Aug	OPEN	
28-Aug	OPEN	
4-Sep	OPEN	
11-Sep	Archeology in the Hill Country	Wilson McKinney
18-Sep	Amazing Migration of Monarch Butterflies	Kip Kiphart





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

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Spring Branch, Texas 78070

We're on the web!  
[www.honeycreekfriends.com](http://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!*