



## Fall 2013 NEWSLETTER

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

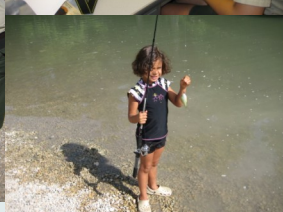
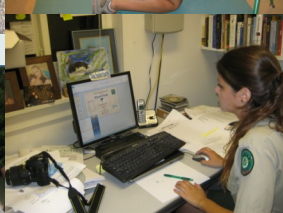
A non-profit organization

### Fishing 101

Guadalupe River State Park

by Craig Hensley

Craig Hensley is offering a fishing class for beginners. These are once a month classes in which the participants must sign up by calling the Discovery Center and must be accompanied by a parent. First Craig shows different types of poles and rod and reels. Next he explains about lures and live bait. He goes over safety and how to put a worm on the hook and the function of the bobber and weight. The group then goes to the river and practices casting before putting bait on the hook. He limits the number of kids to 10 so that each can have someone to help. All equipment is provided by the park and Friends. Each child has their picture taken when they catch their first fish and the picture is placed on a certificate for the participant to take with them. Craig has volunteers help with this experience. If you would like to help and can spare one morning a month contact Craig at the park.



### Board of Directors

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**Employee Recognition & Award Ceremony**

by Craig Hensley

On August 20<sup>th</sup> Texas Parks and Wildlife Department had their annual Employee Recognition and Award Ceremony. The Friends are pleased to announce that Craig Hensley, Guadalupe River State Park Interpreter was named the Community Outreach winner. At the ceremony they showed a short video of some of the many programs that Craig does at our 2 parks. The park has been blessed by his never ending devotion to making sure that children and parents are exposed to nature. His programs are informative and enjoyable. Because of his presence we are seeing many people from nearby coming to the park especially for his programs. The passion that he exhibits is catching and we are also seeing an increase in volunteerism at the park. The Friends are proud that Craig is getting recognized for his work at our parks.

**Pasty Inglet Award**

by Craig Hensley



At the National Audubon Convention, Stevenson, Washington, our most wonderful Flying WILD facilitator, Patsy Inglet received the National Audubon Central Flyway William Dutcher Award for her volunteer work at Mitchell Lake Audubon Center, Cibolo Nature Center, the SA Zoo, Flying WILD, San Antonio Audubon, and Bexar Audubon and Guadalupe River State Park.

**Halloween at the Park**

by Holly Camero

Sunday night, October 27th, the Friends of Guadalupe River State Park/Honey Creek SNA will host the 11<sup>th</sup> annual Halloween at the Park for children ages two to twelve. "Halloween at the Park" allow children to walk down a wooded path lit by solar lights and lanterns while being greeted by costumed characters with candy treats along the way. Just the experience of walking through the trees at night, feeling the wind and hearing the night sounds is a special, unique experience. After completing the trail that starts and ends at the amphitheater, visitors can have hot dogs and refreshments. A storyteller will be telling age appropriate stories at the amphitheater. The event will begin at 6:30 PM with storytelling and trick or treat for young children (2-6) followed by the same activities for big spooks (7-12) from 7:00 to 8:30 PM. Hot dogs and drinks will be served between 6:30 and 8:30 PM while they last. The Park has worked with the Friends to expedite Park entry. **The fee at the entrance to the park will be a \$10.00 flat fee per vehicle which includes entrance, parking, and event.** If you wish to make an additional donation to the Friends you may do so at the event.

Due to the tremendous response in the past couple of years we need community support to man the trail stations where volunteers in costume will provide and hand out candy. We also need volunteers to assist with food, decorating, donation collection, and Monday morning clean-up. If you or your group is interested in participating in this event, please contact:

Holly Camero at [eyesthatfly@aol.com](mailto:eyesthatfly@aol.com), or

Tom Anderson at [tanderson46@satx.rr.com](mailto:tanderson46@satx.rr.com),

If volunteers identify themselves at the gate they will get free admission to the Park.



**September 2013 Programs**

by Craig Hensley

**Bird in the Hand**

Guadalupe River State Park Saturday, September 7 9:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.  
 Join staff and volunteers for a morning of close-up looks at songbirds that call the park home. You'll have the opportunity to learn about bird banding and discover for yourself the beauty of our songbirds, from cardinals and chickadees to goldfinches and doves. This event is great for anyone of any age interested in birds. Join us anytime during the morning at the Amphitheatre behind the Discovery Center -- and be sure to check out the exhibits and other cool stuff in the Center, as well.

**Whooo Goes There?**

Guadalupe River State Park Saturday, September 7 7:30-9:00 p.m.  
 Join our Park Ranger for a walk after the sun goes down to see who's out and about under the cover of dark. We'll "listen" for bats, call for owls, and take a walk on the night side of the park. We may even do a little "mothing." Please plan on meeting at the Discovery Center, bring a flashlight, and wear close-toed shoes.

**Damsels and Dragons Workshop**

Guadalupe River State Park Thursday, September 12 9:00 a.m.-Noon  
 Join Guadalupe River State Park Ranger/Naturalist Craig Hensley for an introductory look at the world of dragonflies and damselflies. You'll learn the basics of their natural history including the roles they play as predators. Identification tips and common species of the area will be covered, followed by a short field experience to look at them live in the field. This workshop will be held at the Discovery Center inside Guadalupe River State Park. A \$5 donation to the Friends Group is requested and can be donated the day of the workshop. This workshop is limited to the first 12 people that register. Please call Craig at 830.438.7653 to reserve a spot or email him at [craig.hensley@tpwd.texas.gov](mailto:craig.hensley@tpwd.texas.gov) by Friday, September 6<sup>th</sup>.

**Fishing 101**

Guadalupe River State Park Saturday, September 14 9:00-11:30 a.m.  
 You are invited to bring your child out and introduce them to the fun of fishing. This program, designed for first- or nearly first-time fishing boys and girls, will teach them and you the basics of fishing, from the types of equipment available to learning how to cast. Your child(ren) will then head to the river and apply their new skills. We are limiting this session to the first 12 children who are registered, so please call Ranger Craig at 830.438.7653 or email him at [craig.hensley@tpwd.texas.gov](mailto:craig.hensley@tpwd.texas.gov) to register.

**Star Party**

Guadalupe River State Park Saturday, September 14 7:00-10:00 p.m.  
 Join members of the San Antonio Astronomical Society for a night of stargazing and telescope viewing! (weather depending) They will set up their telescopes in the overflow parking area above our Day Use Area. A variety of telescopes will be on hand for viewing all kinds of celestial objects from the Moon to distant galaxies, and more!

**Walk Under the Full Moon**

Guadalupe River State Park Thursday, September 19 7:00-8:30 p.m.  
 Join our Park Ranger for an evening walk and watch the moon rise over the Guadalupe River. We'll meet for this full moon walk at the Discovery Center inside the park. Be sure to bring a flashlight and wear close-toed shoes. You'll even get to view the moon in all its glory through one of our telescopes at the end of the walk.

**Batty about Geocaching!**

Guadalupe River State Park Saturday, September 21 9:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.  
 Join us and our friends from Old Tunnel State Park for a day of geocaching and bats! We'll offer three sessions of Geocaching 101 training, at 9 a.m., 11:30 a.m. and 2 p.m., with a twist. Included in our practice geocaches will be clues about the bats of Texas. You'll learn about their ability to get around without any kind of fancy devices, see displays about bats at the Discovery Center and then be invited to head to Old Tunnel State Park later in the day find the final geocache and watch an emergence of Mexican free-tailed bats!  
 We do have a limited number of GPS units. They will be issued on a first-come, first-served basis at the three presentation times.

**Bats of Texas**

Guadalupe River State Park Saturday, September 21 7:00-8:30 p.m.  
 After a day of bats and geocaching fun, join our Park Ranger for a talk about these amazing creatures. Following a presentation at the Amphitheatre behind the Discovery Center, we'll go out with a bat detector and "listen" for these denizens of the dark.

**Monarch Mania Celebration**

Guadalupe River State Park Saturday, September 28 9:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.  
 The monarchs are on their way to Mexico, and here's your chance to learn about them as well as our other scale-winged wonders. We'll have crafts, games and other opportunities to capture, study, and release butterflies of all kinds. In addition, you'll learn what you can do to encourage butterflies in your yard, including what native plants are best for monarchs and other species. Join us at any time from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. for the festivities and fun!

**Prowling for Owls**

Guadalupe River State Park Saturday, September 28 7:00-9:00 p.m.  
 Join our Park Ranger for a presentation on the owls of Texas. You'll learn who's who in the world of nocturnal predators, how they make a living and then head out in search of our local residents. Please bring a flashlight.

## Trails to the Past

by Bryden Moon

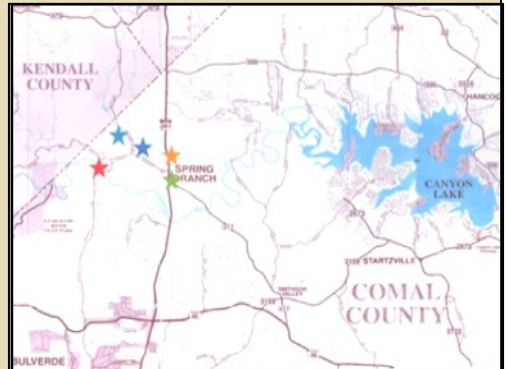
## Following the Trail of Its Heart

### Spring Branch's Post Offices - A Mobile Community

*"Brenda Anderson-Lindemann, author of Spring Branch & Western Comal County, Texas, lives in Spring Branch on lands that were pioneered by her forebear, Hans von Specht...his family and descendants have occupied this Spring Branch property since 1871. A recognized regional historian, Brenda's assistance, as well as her book,\* served as the only sources for this edition."*

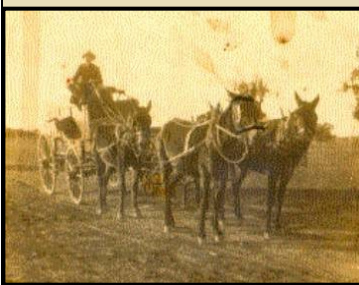
- Bryden E. Moon Jr.

The heart of any early Hill Country community was its supporting post office and general store. Not that the two were always connected, as many startup post offices were conducted out of the settlers' homes. While both were important, it was usually the reigning post office name that defined the community. Spring Branch's story captures many of the elements associated with evolution of a typical rustic Texas community. However, its eventual story might have been a different one and the Spring Branch name might have disappeared altogether from maps like so many other Hill Country places, had not the heartbeat of the community, its post office, been handed off to a succession of different postmasters. That in itself was not special. What is unique: almost every change of postmaster included a change of its physical site (sometimes several miles) and yet when each move occurred, every postmaster along its journey retained the Spring Branch postal name (Illustration right, showing



five of the Spring Branch Post Offices' nine locations).

Present day Spring Branch is located at the crossroads of US Memorial Highway 281 & Farm to Market 311, 21 miles NW of New Braunfels in the majestic Guadalupe river hills of northwestern Comal County, but the original German settlement of Spring Branch, Comal County was two miles west from its present site. Spring Branch's first stakes were not along any major route but near an equally, if not more important natural feature...an accessible water supply. A small spring-fed creek which flowed for 1.5 miles into the Guadalupe River, gave this land value. And as was the case in many nascent settlements, the local artesian stream, originally noted as Spring Creek, would also later served as inspiration for the settlement's ultimate name.



Settled by pioneer Dietrich Knibbe in 1852 (Photo left - Wagoner Charles Knibbe and freighting team transported goods between town and the Hill Country). His family was joined between 1854 and 1856 by five additional families - Elbel, Porter, Imhoff, Horne, and Fuhmann. These six farms were equally divided along opposite banks of Spring Creek; by 1856 they had established a grist mill, cotton gin, and blacksmith shop. Like the majority of many early hamlets, it was never platted, there was no central municipality. Initially without a community name, this status changed with the acceptance of a postal application: the Spring Branch name was introduced when the Post Office was established on July 1, 1858, in the Porter Store. Their first

Postmaster, Louis Willke, was followed by Dr. Charles Porter. The new name of Spring Branch was totally adopted - the stream's name changed from "Spring" to "Spring Branch" as well. During the Civil War we had our first change of location as the Comal Ranch (Bartels) at Spring Branch housed the Confederate post office. Then, post Civil War, Gottlieb Elbel, utilized his home from 1867 to 1872. He recorded in his journal that U.S. mail service post wartime was reestablished between New Braunfels and Fredericksburg via Spring Branch on August 27, 1867, by Adolph Jonas on horseback. Beginning in 1872, the fourth postal site was along the creek not far from Elbel's home in Bernard Monken's store. It stayed there until its fifth setting in 1875, when Hans von Specht maintained the post office in his hilltop home above Specht's Crossing on the Guadalupe for the next 31 years. Occasional floods made it difficult and sometimes almost impossible for the settlers by wagons to retrieve their mail, since the Specht's postal station was across the Guadalupe River from the majority of the community.

*by Brenda is currently underway.*

In 1899, Hans von Specht's son, Wilhelm Specht, purchased the Ed Wolff Store and in 1906, moved the post office back across the Guadalupe to his store, its sixth unique site. Then Charles Knibbe bought the Specht store and stock in November 1907 and became the new postmaster. In 1911, with his three sons, Hermann, Harry and Arno Knibbe, he built a bigger store, adding a filling station and a well-known beer serving establishment (Photo right, Spring Branch Knibbe Cotton Gin, established 1880-1937. Building stood until about 1980. *Hand*



*Painted on wood by Sharon (Hill) Knibbe). However, in 1934 the store and post office were destroyed by fire.*

In 1936, Harry Knibbe and family built the Spring Branch Store on the newly proposed junction of Hwy 66 and old road 46, (today's US Hwy 281 and FM 311). This decision to move to its seventh location was critical in giving the Spring Branch post office stability...it was housed and maintained in this Spring Branch Store from 1936 until 1984. Then a small stand-alone post office was erected on the old store/post office grounds. With its subsequent movement along 281 one mile north to a new post office facility (6500 square feet) in 1999, the Spring Branch name was locked in.

From humble beginnings this now sprawling residential community beat the odds, growing significantly over time. The population for Spring Branch in 1900 was 150 persons in 25 settler families, remaining at a similar level for most of the 20th century. After the completion of Canyon Dam in 1964, census numbers grew and toward the end of the century the unincorporated community saw the rapid growth of subdivisions. 2010 census included 14,618 residents. Spring Branch's current mail jurisdiction incorporates all or a portion of many other now-faded communities: several ghost settlements, such as Wesson, Rebecca Creek, and Anhalt, and portions of Honey Creek. This is a fate that might have befallen Spring Branch, if it had not been for the postmasters of the Spring Branch Post Office. Like participants in an Olympic torch relay, the torch had been passed along to new postmasters at new sites, changing the locale of "heart of the community," yet keeping the Spring Branch name viable...154 years and counting.

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

*\*In 1998, for Spring Branch's 140<sup>th</sup> celebration, Brenda Anderson-Lindemann wrote a book in its honor called Spring Branch & Western Comal County, Texas; 1858-1998. Work on a 160<sup>th</sup> edition book*

**News from Guadalupe River State Park**

by Craig Hensley

Guadalupe River State Park has a great deal going on right now, including dealing with the on-going drought and subsequent water-related issues. As some may have heard or seen in the media, we are in the midst of an on-going water emergency whereby we are striving to conserve water by having water supplies to parts of the park shut off.

As it stands now, water to the day use area is shut off indefinitely, as is the Wagon Ford or walk-in camping loop. We are keeping water off in the other two camping loops from Sunday night through Friday afternoons to also conserve water. In addition, the Cedar Sage camping loop is closed between Monday and Friday.

We are opening both Cedar Sage and Turkey Sink camping loops to water usage during the weekends, from Friday evenings through Sunday afternoons.

The reasons for these measures center on the fact that we typically draw the majority of our water for drinking, showering, etc. directly from the Guadalupe River. When the flow of the river drops below 5 feet per second (?), we must implement our water emergency procedures to conserve our precious water resource. Currently the flow both above (at Comfort) and below (at Spring Branch) is zero. The river has dropped precipitously, thereby not allowing us to draw water from the river.

We do have two small wells that we are using currently to refill the water holding tanks during the week to make up for the water used during the weekend. These have a limited pumping ability to about 5,000 gallons per day. So far, we have been able to replenish the water, but we are also cautious because we don't want to see these wells go dry.

We are also keeping a very close eye on the aging water lines throughout the park (we discovered and repaired a significant leak just as all this was beginning) so that we don't lose water in this manner.

Another reason for conserving water is that the dry weather is also creating a potential fire danger (thus the county-wide burn ban). Thus, in the case of an accidental fire, we need to have a water supply to minimize that potential negative impact.

Needless to say, this is having an impact on camping and day use attendance, as well as program attendance, but we are confident that the procedures in place will keep people coming to the park in some numbers.

Beyond this obvious challenge, many things are going on in the park. Work continues on an Ashe juniper removal project in our uplands. Previously more than 200 acres had been cut and last fall was burned. The results have been remarkable. We have a few species of birds that have never or almost never nested in the park before including Eastern Bluebirds and Vermilion Flycatchers, and we are seeing a wonderful resurgence of native prairie grasses including stands of big bluestem, Indiangrass, and much sideoats grama and little bluestem.

A side project involving native grass seeding plots alongside control plots in those areas where the ground was bare after the fire are showing that broadcasting our native seeds will help with restoration efforts. The two-by-two meter plots that were hand seeded with native seeds collected in the park show excellent germination while the control plots came back mostly with non-native, invasive grasses.

A new project is currently underway, removing Ashe juniper from another 200+ acres. In addition, we are preparing for additional controlled burns (when weather conditions allow). Funding for these projects, and an additional project slated to begin within the next two years on Honey Creek SNA, is being provided through a matching grant with the Upper Guadalupe River Authority (?). This project will help recharge of groundwater supplies while also restoring native landscapes and also providing enhanced hunting success during our public hunts.

Speaking of hunting, preparations are beginning for another public hunt season in the park and at Honey Creek. Due to the efforts of park staff and park hosts, we have seen increased hunter success and we look forward to providing even more for our hunters this fall and winter. Guadalupe River will be offering public hunts for youth and adults using a variety of weapons and targeting everything from white-tailed deer and wild turkey to a host of exotic critters including Axis deer and feral hogs.

Interpretive programming continues to grow and diversity in the park. A new fishing 101 program was initiated in August and will continue monthly. We will be hosting an Angler Education Instructor Course at the park on Wednesday, October 16 from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. in the hopes of attracting certified instructors to help with our fishing programs (thanks to Caleb Harris for this support in this effort). Thus far all of our young fishing boys and girls have had success catching fish.

In addition, we are making plans to initiate an "Archery in the Park" program, pending grant funding, which will provide park guests with the opportunity to learn about archery. This program will also be provided to schools as an outreach opportunity.

Finally, the Discovery Center, where our theme of "Take Another Look" resonates throughout, continues to see increased visitation on a monthly basis, surpassing previous years' numbers. Many thanks go to the dedicated and growing number of volunteers who share their expertise and love of nature with our many visitors, both children and adults.



**October - December Program Highlights\***

by Craig Hensley

**Stories in the Stars**

Saturday, October 12, 7-9 p.m.  
 Saturday, November 9, 7-9 p.m.  
 Saturday, December 7, 7-9 p.m.

Join our Park Interpreter for an evening of stargazing as you discover the seasonal constellations overhead and view galaxies, the moon and other celestial delights. These programs will begin at the Amphitheatre behind the Discovery Center.

**Bird in the Hand**

Saturday, October 12, 9 a.m.-Noon  
 Saturday, November 2, 9 a.m.-Noon  
 Saturday, December 7, 9 a.m.-Noon

Our Park Interpreter and volunteers will be capturing, banding and releasing songbirds at the Park and you are invited to join them for beak-to-nose looks at our overwintering feathered friends. Join us any time between 9 a.m. and Noon at the Amphitheatre behind the Discovery Center.

**Fishing 101**

Saturday, October 19, 9-11 a.m.  
 Saturday, November 9, 9-11 a.m.  
 Saturday, December 14, 9-11 a.m.

Join our Park Interpreter and trained volunteers for a morning of fishing for your first-time or near first-time fishing boys and girls. We'll provide the equipment and the Friends Group along with Matt's Bait and Tackle will provide the bait. Your youngster(s) will learn the basics of fishing, how to cast and then try their luck in the Guadalupe River. Reservations are required for this youth fishing program and can be made by calling 830.438.7653 or emailing [craig.hensley@tpwd.texas.gov](mailto:craig.hensley@tpwd.texas.gov).

**Geocaching 101**

Saturday, October 19, 1-3 p.m.  
 Saturday, November 23, 9-11 a.m. or 1-3 p.m.  
 Saturday, December 21, 9-11 a.m. or 1-3 p.m.

If you would like to learn about the fun outdoor activity of Geocaching, then join our Park Interpreter for an introduction to this global treasure hunt. We provide the GPS units and instruction on their use. You'll then head out on our practice course to test your skills. Reservations are required for this youth fishing program and can be made by calling 830.438.7653 or emailing [craig.hensley@tpwd.texas.gov](mailto:craig.hensley@tpwd.texas.gov). Please be sure to specify whether you want the morning or afternoon session.

\*Additional programs will be posted on the Park's website in coming weeks.

Go to: <http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us/state-parks/guadalupe-river>

**2013 Dues**

by J.W. Pieper

**2013 Membership Dues Are Now Payable**

It is a time of renewal, and if you have not renewed your Friends of GRSP/Honey Creek membership for 2013 it is time to do so. As you know, this newsletter keeps you current with the activities at the Park, but the costs of sending out the newsletter are continuing to increase.

As a reminder, we are a 501 (c) 3 organization which means that contributions to the Friends organization are tax deductible. Just use the application on the inside back cover of this newsletter and mail your check to the official address for the Friends, 3350 Park Road 31, Spring Branch, Texas 78070 or drop it off at Park Headquarters on your next visit.

The Board of Directors has authorized the cancellation of subscription privileges to the Quarterly Newsletter in February for all members who are in arrears.

**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.org](http://www.honeycreekfriends.org)

**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 first  
Thursday at 6:30 pm.  
And bring a friend!**