

Spring 2015 NEWSLETTER

Friends of Guadalupe River, Honey Creek, Inc.

A non-profit organization

PRESIDENT'S LETTER

by JW Pieper

Board of Directors

Spring is in the air at Guadalupe River State Park and at Honey Creek, and soon we will see the telltale green on the trees appearing as the cedar elms, persimmons, gum bumelias and buckeyes begin to show their spring colors. The scent of the agarita blossoms will greet you and the prickly pear will be showing their bright yellow colors. The agarita bushes will soon begin to show tiny yellow flowers and the wild plum tree behind the Rust house will be in full bloom - a true indicator that Spring is upon us. Soon the golden-cheeked warblers will be sharing their songs with us on the Saturday hikes as they return to build their nests. We will see the first wildflowers peeking through to liven up the countryside - a wonderful time of year to visit the Park and take a guided Saturday hike to Honey Creek.

Holly Camero has been busy preparing for the influx of 3rd graders from Northeast Schools. In two days of training in mid-February Holly, Thea Platz and Will Platz trained a large number of volunteer trainers who will present the material to the students during the month of March. If you have some available time, come out and watch our future in action as the children learn to appreciate nature and become comfortable in the great outdoors.

2014 was a busy time at the Park and you may or may not notice all that has transpired. One significant item you will probably see as soon as you drive into the park, for in mid-February a prescribed burn cleared much of the product of a previous project to clear a majority of the ashe juniper and underbrush. This will open the areas around the southernmost trails to grasses and wildflowers in the years to come. It also removes much of the dangerous fuel should an accidental grass fire be started that could quickly burn out of control and threaten campers and our beautiful, newly upgraded campgrounds.

Craig Hensley has scheduled a large number of outdoor offerings to those interested in participating during the spring. Elsewhere in this issue of our newsletter you will find descriptions of those outings that range from calling owls to identifying planets, and from hikes at night to teaching kids and adults to fish. Craig is always busy around the Discovery Center or leading our visitors in informative programs to see, do, and learn about all there is to offer in the Park. Come out and enjoy being a part of one or more of those interesting, entertaining and educational programs. Even better, bring a friend or some kids to introduce them to the wonders of nature at Guadalupe River State Park.

Christmas in the Park

by Laura Horner

On Saturday, December 6th, Guadalupe River State Park hosted its first annual Christmas in the Park event. Prior to the event two staff members spotted Santa along a hiking trail and created a very popular video on our Facebook page - garnering over 33,000 views so far! The next day, close to 100 people came to the park amphitheater for a night of holiday fun. Santa made a special appearance to read *Twas the Night Before Christmas* and greet the eager children. With spirits high and bellies full of refreshments (graciously provided by the Friends of GRSP/HCSNA and Starbucks and HEB of Bulverde), visitors bundled up in blankets for a viewing of "How the Grinch Stole Christmas". Many attendees look forward to similar events in the future. Park staff would like to thank the Friends group, Starbucks, HEB, and park volunteers for their time, donations, and efforts in making this event possible.



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Hill Country History

Trails to the Past by Bryden Moon

A Skirmish along the Trail Battle of Walkers' Creek (part III)

The 1844 Battle of Walker's Creek (BWC) has headlined the past two editions. Occurring less than 20 miles upriver from the Guadalupe River State Park in unpopulated Kendall County land, 16 Rangers outnumbered over 4 to 1 by Comanches, prevailed due to the leadership of Major John Coffee Hays, their courage and their confidence in using Colt five-shot pistols versus the heretofore standard of the day, one-shot black powder weapons. Considered a watershed event, the BWC, leveled the playing field for both settlers and mounted patrols when so equipped in future engagements. Yet there is even more to the story regarding the after-effects of Kendall County's Battle of Walker's Creek and today we will journey over two different paths: the post-battle armature of travelers, and Samuel Colt's legacy.

An interesting development occurred post-BWC; details on individual's arsenals started cropping up in narratives, diaries, logs and publications. During most inventories of weapons you learn that Colt is an established brand name and that revolvers have evolved as the latest gear. Here is a May 1846

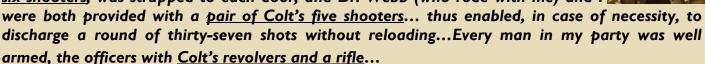
observation by Dr. Ferdinand Roemer as New Braunfels volunteers, who are concerned for the well-being of the Adelsverein's newest colony, head off to Fredericksburg: With commendable alacrity twelve young men volunteered to make this dangerous trip. All armed themselves to the limit; for example, the leader whom the band had chosen, had eighteen shots in readiness for the Indians, since he carried two Colt pistols with revolving cylinders, each containing five shots, and a rifle manufactured on the same principle, containing eight shots. Armed in this manner,

they left in a cheerful mood on the next morning.

German immigrant Carl Phillip Beseler laments the weapons of choice for the Sisterdale settlers in the early 1850s, who have decided they need to punish the Indians: Early next morning a decent bunch of scouters set out in search of an Indian trail. Their weapons were all kinds of German firearms, rifles and shotguns, all were muzzle-loaders. Only two of Colt's revolvers were in use. Zink was the only one that had a revolving 8-shooting rifle.

There were more...John Russell Bartlett, leader of the Mexican Boundary Commission, who wrote **Personal Narrative of Explorations and Incidents**, details in an entry from October 10th,

1850: My train now consisted of six wagons, each drawn by five mules, and my carriage by four: the latter...It might also with propriety be termed an armory, and did receive that appellation from the number of fire-arms contained in it. First, there was suspended at the top a double barreled-gun, while to one of the uprights was affixed my rifle, one of Sharp's repeaters; a heavy revolver, one of Colt's six-shooters, was strapped to each door; and Dr. Webb (who rode with me) and I



Kendall County's namesake, George Wilkins Kendall, who in 1851 plans to accompany and witness a large mid-western Plains Indian treaty, takes the time to describe the pre-journey hustle and bustle. Featured in an article to his newspaper, the New Orleans Picayune: Some fifty wagons, loaded with Indian presents and provisions, will accompany the expedition escorted by a company of U.S.



Hill Country History



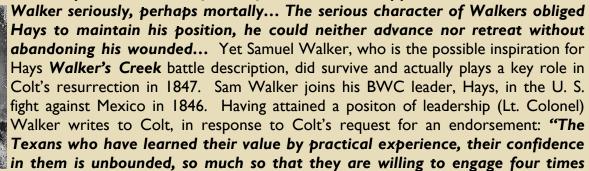
Trails to the Past by Bryden Moon

dragoons...busily employed in getting ready...Others are running bullets, others again are cleaning out their guns and <u>Colt's revolvers</u> – all are busy.

Which leads us to an unbelievable "the rest of the story" that involves Samuel Colt...amazingly, two years <u>before</u> the BWC in 1844, Colt was no longer in the weapons business. Colt's Patent Arms Company was bankrupt by early 1842: forced into receivership, it is liquidated later that year. While he had moved on to dabbling in other inventions, in 1842 Samuel Colt was considered a failed inventor and businessman, a bankrupt industrialist.* The Colt guns that were used by the Rangers in 1844 had been purchased by the Republic of Texas in the late 1830s.



In the last edition Samuel Walker was profiled as one of the courageous BWC participants in a letter to Sam Houston... Hays sent to Bexar for reinforcements and supplies... two wounded, Mr.



their number...Without your Pistols we would not have had the confidence to have undertaken such daring adventures. With improvements...I think they can be rendered the most perfect weapon in the World for light mounted troops which is the only efficient troops that can be placed upon our extensive Frontier to keep the various warlike tribes of Indians & marauding Mexicans in subjection. The people throughout Texas are anxious to procure your pistols & I doubt not you would find sale for a large number at this time...

Walker also has specific ideas on how make Colt's revolver even better and after corresponding, Colt comes up with a new and improved revolver, initially called the Holster Model. Convinced that this is a substantial weapon that would meet the needs of the United States Mounted Rifles and the Texas Rangers, Walker engages President Polk on Colt's behalf, arranging for an order of 1000. A contract is signed on January 4, 1847. Now Sam Colt has to scramble, he hasn't any money or manufacturing plant. Colt engages Eli Whitney's son to manufacture the Holster at their Whitneyville, Ct. plant. More orders from the U.S. enabled Colt to move into a new factory of his own in Hartford, Ct. and laid the foundation for an entire line of revolvers that would make Colt's Firearms Manufacturing Company the most important arms maker of the 19th century.

Leading from the front, Samuel Hamilton Walker was killed on October 9, 1847 during a Mexican War engagement at Huamantla, Tlaxcala, Mexico. And this time there was no mistaking the source of the name as Colt's new hardy and heavy (4 pounds, 9 ounces), six-shooting .44 caliber was renamed the *Walker Colt* in honor of the war fallen hero.

There are more stories to be told!

*A lot of information is packed into the Dennis Adler's cocktail-table quality book <u>Colt Single Action: From Patersons to Peacemakers</u> detailing Samuel Colt's biography...a visual tale of America's preeminent 19th century gun maker.

Hill Country History

Trails to the Past by Bryden Moon

A Skirmish along the Trail Battle of Walkers' Creek - A Link to Our Lands

Today we are tying up loose ends in the aftermath of the Battle of Walker's Creek (BWC). Does the name Joshua Threadgill mean anything to you? Wouldn't think so yet he was at the Battle of San Jacinto on March 13, 1836, the concluding military event of the Texas Revolution...and he was also at the 1844 Battle of Walker's Creek. Today he is part of the rest of the story.

Joshua Threadgill was referenced twice in Tom Western's post-BWC June 16, 1844, letter to Sam Houston regarding the BWC engagement: messenger (Mr. Threadgill) who Maj. Hays sent to Bexar for reinforcements and supplies left them & Threadgill it is said stated that they were Comanche...so Joshua was one of Hays' 15 rangers. Would you believe Mr. Threadgill has connection with our park and it deals with Honey Creek State Natural Area (HCSNA)? A few years ago in a quest to uncover the earliest historical reference of the Honey Creek name, you were introduced to 1840s land surveys; the earliest, April 19, 1846, was penned onto a Comal (Bexar) County land survey for Joshua Threadgill (abstract No. 624, survey No. 97). In 1848 he also acquired three additional land parcels shown on the adjacent map (abstract numbers 520, 521, & 472), and thus he had 1280 acres of prime HCSNA land. This was a fleeting connection, as he



sold all of his land in 1850.

By the way, the surveyor for all four tracts was Joseph Albert Tivy, and the authorizing signature, the Chief Surveyor of Bexar County...that's right, it

was Threadgill's former BWC Ranger leader, John Coffee Hays.

John 16 46 as 16 9.18.6

There are more stories to be told!

2015 Homesteader Homecoming

Mark your calendar...for **2:00** on Sunday, **April 26**

At the *Knibbe Ranch* (10006 Spring Branch Rd. Spring Branch)

Learn about Spring Branch and the Hans Heinrich Dietrich Knibbe family

from Homesteader Homecoming member Brenda Anderson-Lindemann and Host Chuck Knibbe.

As usual, Friends of Guadalupe/Honey Creek will supply the drinks, and guests and friends members are asked to bring a sweet.

Any questions please call Bryden Moon @ (830) 336-3375 or e-mail bemoonir @aol.com.

Park Activities



Happenings at Guadalupe River State Park and Honey Creek State Natural Area

by: Laura Horner

Guadalupe River State Park and Honey Creek State Natural Area, which is comprised of 4,232.4 acres of the Texas Hill Country, has seen several new projects, changes, tasks and successes this past year.

Currently, the park is wrapping up a capital construction project and starting a minor repair renovation. Capital construction consisted of replacing the water lines in the park along with upgrades and additions in electrical service to camping loops. Turkey Sink now offers 50 amp service and Cedar Sage now offers 30 amp service. In addition to new water and electrical lines, the sites now have new picnic table boards, grills and lantern hooks. Our minor repair renovation of headquarters started on January 5th which will include new paint, tile and a new countertop that will have three check-in stations.

Other changes and task improvements to the park include all new park signs with some having a more family friendly feel to them, all new carsonite trail signs, new VOP signs for the trailheads, new trail maps which include the trails on the Bauer Unit which is on the north side of the river, new dark sky compliant LED lights at the restrooms, and a new water bottle filling station at the water fountain at HQ which has helped eliminate waste from 1033 plastic bottles so far.

One of the many successes this year includes our Public Management Hunts for both GRSP and HCSNA. We had 14 hunts this year at the state park and state natural area. Hunt totals include 56 whitetail bucks, 38 whitetail does, 16 axis, 3 aoudad, 1 sika and 68 feral hogs taken off the property during 30 days of hunting. In a new endeavor this year, the park hosted our first ever Christmas event which was a huge success. Some staff members and volunteers made a Facebook video to advertise for the event which went viral with over 34k views, 110.5K total reached, 9.3k post clicks, 2.4k likes/comments and 404 shares! Over 90 guests showed up for the event which included a visit from Santa who read *T'was the Night Before Christmas* followed by snacks and refreshments donated by Starbucks and the Friends Group for enjoyment while watching How the Grinch Stole Christmas. [Details on how our event was a success can be found on GRSP's Inside Track page.]

Since one of our Facebook videos went crazy, we decided to try our luck again and got more staff and volunteers involved with a video to showcase our four First Day Hike opportunities which has been viewed over 17.5k times. We had a successful turnout for our Midnight First Day Hike with 14 individuals braving the cold and rainy weather to ring-in the New Year with owls.

Stay tuned to our Facebook page for more fun and exciting happening at Guadalupe River State Park and Honey Creek State Natural Area.



Christmas in the Park Event Poster



Midnight First Day Hikers













First Adopt-A-Highway Trash Clean-up



On January 15, 2015, park staff and volunteers participated in the first trash clean-up for Park Road 31 from Hwy 46 to the park entrance. It was a cold and chilly morning but park staff and volunteers cleaned up 6 miles (3 miles on each side of the road) but not before having breakfast tacos and a safety meeting. Thank you to everyone that came out to help keep the park road clean! Hope to see you at the next trash clean-up!





Park Activities

Upcoming programs at Guadalupe River State Park

by Craig Hensley

We hope you'll make plans to visit one of YOUR Texas state parks!

Bird in the Hand

Guadalupe River State Park

Saturday, March 7, 2015

9 a.m.-Noon

Looking for a great way to introduce your children to the wonder of birds? Then join Park Ranger and bird bander Craig Hensley for a morning of nose-to-beak looks at our native songbirds. From cardinals to goldfinches, you and your children will learn about the science and art of bird banding and how you can help. Meet us at the Discovery Center. This program is free with a Park Pass or \$7 daily pass (children ages 12 and under are free).

Batty About Bats

Guadalupe River State Park

Saturday, March 7, 2015

7-8 p.m.

We are extremely pleased to invite you to join special guest and TPWD bat expert Nyta Brown, Manager of Old Tunnel State Park, for a presentation on bats. Her presentation will shed light on the amazing adaptations, diversity and lives of these denizens of the dark, from our local bats to bats around the world. This program is free with a Park Pass or a \$7 daily pass (children ages 12 and under are free).

Bat-astic Geocaching!

Guadalupe River State Park

Tuesday, March 10, 2015

10-11:30 a.m.

Join Guadalupe River State Park's Ranger Craig Hensley Old Tunnel's Nyta Brown for a lesson on geocaching and during the process learn about the bats! We'll teach you the basics of using a GPS unit and send you out in search of geocaches on our practice course. In the process you'll discover the wonders of bats and why they are so important to us. This program will be held at the amphitheatre behind the Discovery Center. This is free with a Park Pass or a \$7 daily pass (children ages 12 and under are free).

Who Goes There?

Guadalupe River State Park

Wednesday, March 11, 2015

9-10:30 a.m.

Join Guadalupe River State Park's Ranger Craig Hensley for a walk in search of signs of wildlife along the Park's trails. From tracks and scat to the animals themselves, we'll put on our detective hats to see who's been out and about. This program is free with a Park Pass or a \$7 daily pass (children ages 12 and under are free).

River Critters

Guadalupe River State Park

Thursday, March 12, 2015

9:30-11:30 a m

Join park staff as we wade into the Guadalupe River in search of tadpoles, fish, insects and more during this sure-to-be-fun morning activity. Meet at the Amphitheater behind the Discovery Center. Be sure to dress to get wet as we will get in the water! This program is free with a Park Pass or a \$7 daily pass (children ages 12 and under are free)

Prowlin' for Owls

Guadalupe River State Park

Friday, March 13, 2015

7-8:30 p.m.

We're heading out for a hootin' good time as we call and listen for Barred and possibly other owls that inhabit Guadalupe River State Park. Join the Park Ranger learn about owls and their amazing adaptations as well as who's whooooo among the owls of Texas. This program will be held at the amphitheatre at the Discovery Center and is free with a Park Pass or a \$7 daily pass (children ages 12 and under are free).

Bugs-R-Us

Guadalupe River State Park

Saturday, March 14, 2015

10-11:30 a.m.

Join the Park Ranger at Guadalupe River State Park for a morning of chasing six-legged wonders from butterflies to grasshoppers. The Park will provide the nets for this insect-catching fun for children and adults, alike. This program is free with a Park Pass or a \$7 daily pass (children ages 12 and under are free). Please meet at the amphitheatre behind the Discovery Center.

Honey Creek Night Hike

Guadalupe River State Park

Saturday, March 14, 2015

7-9 p.m

Join the Park Ranger at Guadalupe River State Park for hike to the beautiful Honey Creek under the cover of dark. Following a presentation at the Rust House, you'll head out in search of bats, owls and more as we venture to creek. Be sure to bring a flashlight. This program is free with a Park Pass or a \$7 daily pass (children ages 12 and under are free).

Storybook Trail

Guadalupe River State Park

Tuesday, March 17, 2015

9:30-11:30 a.m

Join us for a special morning of costumed characters, stories and trailside fun. You and your children will not only be introduced to a few costumed critters but wonderful stories about them, as well. Among the critters will be a spider, bat, squirrel and more. This program is free with a Park Pass or \$7 daily pass (children ages 12 and under are free). Meet at the amphitheatre behind the Discovery Center.

Bird in the Hand

Guadalupe River State Park

Wednesday, March 18, 2015

9 a.m.-Noon

Looking for a great way to introduce your children to the wonder of birds? Then join Park Ranger and bird bander Craig Hensley for a morning of nose-to-beak looks at our native songbirds. From cardinals to goldfinches, you and your children will learn about the science and art of bird banding and how you can help. Meet us at the Discovery Center. This program is free with a Park Pass or \$7 daily pass (children ages 12 and under are free).

Fishing 101

Guadalupe River State Park

Thursday, March 19, 2015

9-11 a.m

If you are looking for a lifetime gift for your child, consider joining the staff and volunteers at Guadalupe River State Park for an introduction to fishing. We'll provide the rods and reels as well as the bait as we go in search of sunfish, bass and catfish. Your child will learn the basics of casting, setting the hook and how to properly release a fish. We do have a limited number of rods and reels, so please email Park Ranger Craig Hensley at craig.hensley@tpwd.texas.gov to reserve a spot for your child, or call 830.438.7653. This program is free with a Park Pass or a \$7 daily pass (children ages 12 and under are free).

Creek Critters

Guadalupe River State Park

Friday, March 20, 2015

I-4 p.m.

Join park staff as check out the critters that call Honey Creek home. From tadpoles and fish to aquatic insects, you'll have a unique opportunity to find out why Honey Creek is so special. This program is limited to the first 25 people that sign up. Please call Ranger Craig at 830.438.7653 or email craig.hensley@tpwd.texas.gov to reserve a spot. We will meet at the Rust House inside the Park. Be sure to dress to get wet and be ready for a hike to get to the water. This program is free with a Park Pass or a \$7 daily pass (children ages 12 and under are free).

The Mysterious Case of the Guadalupe Fledermaus: A Ranger Sam Mystery

Guadalupe River State Park

Friday, March 20, 2015

7:30-9 p.m.

Ranger Sam is on the job again. There have been several strange occurrences at the park and we've called in our famous Ranger to solve the mystery. Come on out and help figure out the mystery and learn how to use a GPS unit at the same time! This event is free with a Park Pass or a \$7 daily pass (children ages 12 and under are free). We'll meet at the amphitheatre behind the Discovery Center.

Park Activities



Upcoming programs at Guadalupe River State Park

by Craig Hensley

Mammal Mania

Guadalupe River State Park

Saturday, March 21, 2015

10-11:30 a.m.

Join Ranger Craig for a fur-filled good time as we explore the skins, skulls, tracks and scat of our fur-covered friends. Following that we'll head out on the trails to discover which ones have been out and about. This presentation will take place at the Amphitheatre behind the Discovery Center. This program is free with a Park Pass or a \$7 daily pass (children ages 12 and under are free).

Prowlin' for Owls

Guadalupe River State Park

Saturday, March 21, 2015

7-8:30 p.m.

We're heading out for a hootin' good time as we call and listen for Barred and possibly other owls that inhabit Guadalupe River State Park. Join the Park Ranger learn about owls and their amazing adaptations as well as who's whooooo among the owls of Texas. This program will be held at the amphitheatre at the Discovery Center and is free with a Park Pass or a \$7 daily pass (children ages 12 and under are free).

Fishing 101

Guadalupe River State Park

Saturday, March 28, 2015

9-11 a.m.

If you are looking for a lifetime gift for your child, consider joining the staff and volunteers at Guadalupe River State Park for an introduction to fishing. We'll provide the rods and reels as well as the bait as we go in search of sunfish, bass and catfish. Your child will learn the basics of casting, setting the hook and how to properly release a fish. We do have a limited number of rods and reels, so please email Park Ranger Craig Hensley at craig.hensley@tpwd.texas.gov to reserve a spot for your child, or call 830.438.7653. This program is free with a Park Pass or a \$7 daily pass (children ages 12 and under are free).

Stories in the Stars

Guadalupe River State Park

Saturday, March 28, 2015

8-10 p.m.

Join members of the San Antonio Astronomical Association and Park staff for a night of stargazing! We'll check out Jupiter, the Moon and other celestial wonders following a presentation at the amphitheatre, located behind the Discovery Center. This program is free with a Park Pass or \$7 daily pass (children ages 12 and under are free).

Archery in the Park

Guadalupe River State Park

Sunday, March 29, 2015

I-3 p.m.

Archery is one of the safest outdoor activities. You will have the opportunity to learn the skill of archery through a disciplined approach. There are a limited number of slots a vailable for this session. Please email craig.hensley@tpwd.texas.gov to reserve your slot. Please note this is for persons ages 10 and up. This program is free with a Park Pass or a \$7 daily pass (children ages 12 and under are free). Please meet at the Rust House.

2015 Dues by Bill Beach

2015 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 2015 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):	ne(s): Date	
Address:	City,State,Zip:	
Email		Phone:
Membership Type:	New MemberRenewal	Change of Address
Level of Membership:	\$5 Education or Youth Organization	\$50 Sustaining Member
1	\$5 Student (under 18)	\$100 Contributing Member
I	\$10 Individual (over 18)	\$500 Corporate Partner
, 	\$15 Family	\$1000 Life Membership
I would like to help the Fri	ends 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

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!