



Spring 2016 NEWSLETTER

Friends of Guadalupe River, Honey Creek, Inc.

A non-profit organization

PRESIDENT'S LETTER

by JW Pieper

Spring is a time of renewal, and renewal is underway all around us at the Guadalupe River State Park and at Honey Creek State Natural Area. A mild winter has morphed into a warm spring, allowing early yellow blossoms on the agarita bushes and small flowers are blooming everywhere. We have been watching the bluebonnet plants throughout the winter along the trails in Honey Creek, and soon they will be proudly displaying their famous Texas state flower for all of us to enjoy. If you have not joined our weekly Saturday morning guided hike through Honey Creek lately it is a wonderful time of year to enjoy this short hike and be reminded of the beautiful creek and riparian area that is so accessible from the Park. We leave at 9 AM every Saturday morning and the hike takes about two and a half hours.

In keeping with the renewal theme, we have a new president and vice-president of the Friends of GRSP/ Honey Creek. Dave Kibler currently serves the Friends of GRSP as president after several terms as vice-president, secretary, and maintenance chair. He has also been the primary liaison with Boy Scout Troop 285 of San Antonio, which has performed regular maintenance service projects at GRSP over the past 10 years. He is serving as Secretary of the Board of the Bergheim Volunteer Fire Department, a position he has held since the founding of the Department in 2005. He is retired from a career with AT&T and is active in numerous community organizations locally and in San Antonio. Included are the Native Plant Society of Texas, the Boy Scouts of America, the San Antonio Bexar Kiwanis Club, various genealogical societies, and his church choir.

Thea Platz has a tremendous background in outdoor education. She was a participant in the first Texas Master Naturalist Class in the state, and has put that education to work, overseeing the Environmental Outdoor Education programs for North East Independent School District in San Antonio. Each year over 1,500 students enjoy and learn in nature through participation in her NEISD programs, which include the spring and fall 3rd grade programs at Honey Creek.

Thea played an instrumental leadership role in the formative years of the Texas Master Naturalist organization, and helped to take the local initiative to the State and National level. She was the first Master Naturalist volunteer to be recognized for the 5,000 hour service award, has received the U.S. President's volunteer service award, and has achieved over 10,000 hours of service through various volunteer endeavors. Currently Thea is co-leader, along with TP&WD's Judit Green, of the Texas Children in Nature (TCiN) San Antonio collaborative and is on the state steering committee of TCiN. She also serves on the Leadership Advisory Board to Texas A&M AgriLife Extension-Bexar County, and has served in that capacity for over five years.

Bill Beach will continue as our treasurer and Bob Gray will continue to serve as secretary of our board of directors. Bob and Nancy Gray are long-time leaders of our Saturday morning Honey Creek hikes, and Bill Beach is an accomplished photographer and has retired as a long-serving member of the staff of GRSP. All are busy people who enjoy serving Guadalupe River State Park through the Friends of GRSP/Honey Creek.

Board of Directors

President / Maintenance

Dave Kibler
djikib@gvtc.com

Vice President

Thea Platz
tplatz@neisd.net

Secretary

Bob Gray
RGrayTX@gmail.com

Treasurer

Bill Beach
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Director / Discovery Center

Richard Mizanin
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Saturday Night Program

Craig Hensley
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Holly Camero
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Director / Hikes

Nancy Gray
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Director at Large

Tom Anderson
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Director at Large

J.W. Pieper
jwp1@gvtc.com

2016 Homesteader Homecoming

Mark your calendar...for 2:00 on Sunday, April 3

At the *Kendalia Public Library* (2610 FM 473, Kendalia)

Learn about Kendalia and the earlier settlement of Curry's Creek from Kendalia Library Director Donna Jonas.

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 bemoonjr@aol.com.

Trails to the Past

by Bryden Moon

Curry's Creek - More Than a Watershed An Early Regional Settlement (Part I)

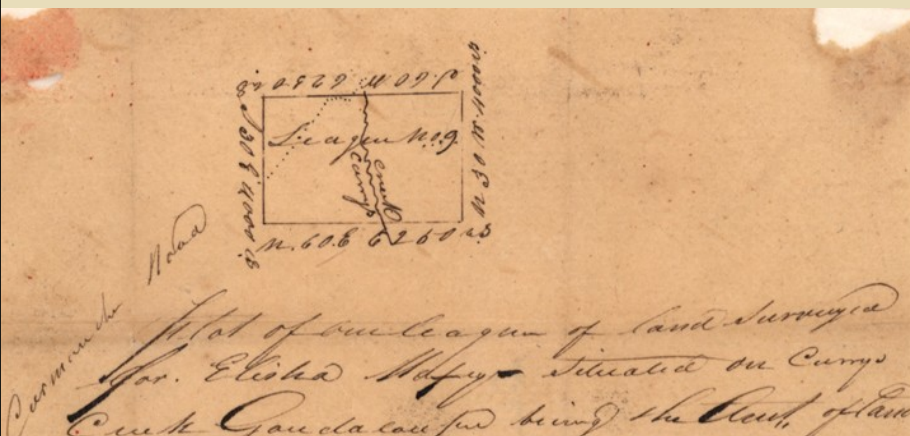
The Curry's Creek region's heritage is unique. While questions still remain regarding, "Who was the Curry in the creek's name?" and the exact date of area settlement, many of its regional details both pre and post settlement were exclusive and uncommon within Kendall County.

Curry's Creek defines both a waterway and an early Hill Country enclave and Jacob DeCordova's 1851 map of Texas (regional portion of map right) might be the earliest state map to identify the creek by name. With his illustration of the creek's twists and turns, DeCordova also unintentionally laid out the contours of the Curry's Creek community as early settlers mirrored the pathway of the creek. Settlement-wise, German immigration into and throughout the Hill Country was the norm. And although the Curry's Creek region wasn't immune to German immigrants, early on it bucked the trend as a predominance of Anglo-American settlers put down roots and stamped their brands in the northeast corner of future Kendall County. These pioneers also distinguished themselves by serving as Texas Rangers in numbers disproportionate to their region's population.

Today our focus is pre-settlement, and here it is worth exploring the lore surrounding the name Curry. Curry's Creek has been spelled in numerous ways, almost rivaling in number of ways "mosquito" was spelled by Texas pioneers. Legend holds that an early settler named Curry drowned and the creek was named in his honor. However another scenario develops when examining early land documents. This gives us the opportunity to highlight that the two earliest land grants in future Kendall County were surveyed in the



Curry's Creek region; each of these northeastern Kendall County land grants included portions of the Curry's Creek watershed. These surveys were conducted years before any Hill Country settlement and over two decades before Kendall County boundaries were carved out in 1862. We'll jump to the second land grant which was



surveyed in 1838. It was the first Republic of Texas survey (Texas became a republic in 1836) conducted in Kendall County. Called the Elisha Maxey grant, it was located a few miles

Trails to the Past

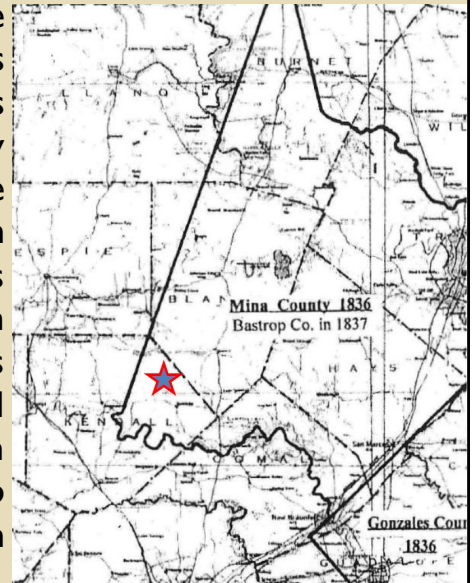
by Bryden Moon

southeast of today's Kendalia and if you look closely at the survey map (above), drawn up and included with the original paperwork, you can read Curry's Creek and Elisha Maxey. The Elisha Maxey survey was conducted on September 2, 1838 and the tract included 4428 acres (6.919 square miles); this specific number of acres was called a league. Since no one lived in any part of the Hill Country on this date, it is highly likely that the Curry's Creek name evolved from this singular survey as the surveyor took the opportunity to name the creek to serve as a point of reference on this and future field work. Elisha Maxey never lived on his land grant.

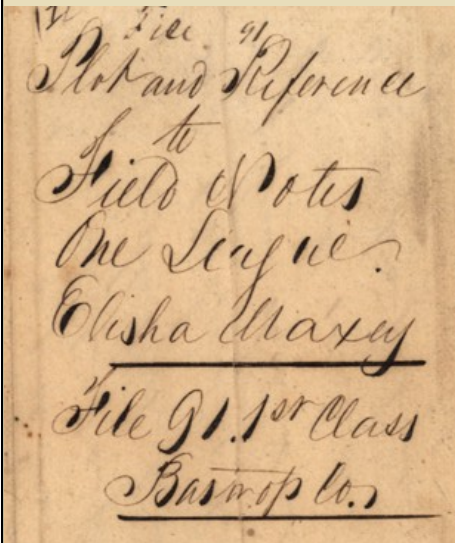
While part of Spanish Texas until 1821, in the entire area of what became Kendall County there were no Spanish land grants. The lack of surveys, land grants and settlement in this era was tied to the intensity of Native-American activity/presence, throughout the entire region. Kendall County's very first land grant was the county's only Mexican land grant. The Daniel Long Richardson



grant's survey was conducted on September, 2, 1835, and was also a league. Its survey & grant were obviously written in Spanish. On this survey there was no reference to Curry's Creek, yet as it flowed into the larger Guadalupe River several miles south, it was identified as part of the Guadalupe River in Spanish as "aguas del Rio Guadalupe." Daniel Richardson never lived on his land grant.



Embedded in both the Richardson and Maxey documents are land jurisdictions that appear out of place, totally foreign. As illustrated in the contemporary map graphic, pre Comal, Blanco and Kendall Counties, portions of northeast Kendall County were first part of Mexico's **Mina** and then the Republic of Texas's **Bastrop**. The Mexican jurisdiction faded with the onset of the Republic of Texas's Bastrop, which in turn was lost to time – bundled into and eclipsed by Comal County when it was established in 1846.



Stay tuned for more on the Curry's Creek settlement and settlers next edition...and please come join us at this year's **Homesteader Homecoming** in Kendalia on Sunday, April 3rd [see promo, page 1 above]. Preeminent Curry's Creek and Kendalia historian, Donna Jonas, will share community stories at the old Kendalia School House.

There are more stories to be told!

News from the Park

By Craig Hensley, Park Interpreter

First Day Bird-a-thon a Huge Success

At 12:07 a.m. on January 1st, 2016, the first bird of the day went on my list for the Friends Group fundraiser and First Day Hike. I had decided to devote this day to help raise dedicated funds for a new bird blind at the park, one that would provide park visitors a greater opportunity for watching birds in more comfort than the current blind. The Barred Owl responded to my human attempts to imitate the bird. One down, 29 more species to go – or so I thought.

The idea was to find as many species of birds as I and anyone who wanted to tag along could in one day. I told everyone that agreed to pledge money for each species, donations that ranged from \$5 per species to twenty-five cents, that if we got 30 species on what turned out to be a cold and windy day, I would consider it a success.

Really lucky? Forty species.

Throughout the day we picked up those we expected to, from cardinals and chickadees to Black-crested Titmice and Western Scrub Jays. As we approached noon we had yet to get many of the winter sparrows that grace the park and had yet to see a day-flying raptor. Then, down near the entrance to the Wagon Ford camping loop we found White-throated and Field Sparrows, and as we stepped out of the woods and headed across the overflow parking lot, a raptor finally appeared.

High overhead my first thought was Osprey – and what a great bird to add to the list for this is never common in the area. A closer look at the high-flying bird revealed something even more wonderful – an adult Bald Eagle! This is the first Bald Eagle I had ever seen at the park (a pair nests within several miles of the park, or so I am told). What a great way to get our first raptor.

After settling down just a bit I look out toward the river overlook at the end of Barred Owl Trail and first the call and then the form of the Red-shouldered Hawk appears! Great, two raptors not fifteen minutes after telling my fellow birders we needed raptors. And then not two minutes later what to my wandering eyes should appear but an actual Osprey! Three raptors in less than ten minutes!

It was dawning on me that not only were thirty species in the bag, we were closing in on forty! That afternoon we headed to Honey Creek and picked up Dark-eyed Juncos, Vesper and Savannah Sparrows and more. By then we were pushing toward fifty species – fifty!

Near the end of the day, after seeing a Kestrel another smallish falcon appeared in front of us, hunkered down on a tree branch facing the cold wind. I looked at it and looked at it and Eureka! It was none other than a Merlin! Just like the Bald Eagle, another bird I had never seen at the park and Honey Creek until this one special day.

By day's end we had seen fifty species of birds, an accomplishment I did not think at all possible when the day began. Many thanks go to the folks that joined me for part of or the entire day including John Prentice and Linda Gindler, Julie Crouch, Mary Mathey, Ed Rogers, and Kenlynn Volz – a wonderful, high-school birder, among others. Without everyone's eyes, we could not have reached this goal.

We are gathering contributions on our way to building a state-of-the art new bird blind to enable children and bird enthusiasts to observe birds in nature. During and because of our First Day Bird-a-Thon we received pledges and contributions from 28 individuals or families and raised a total of a little over \$2,100 for the new bird blind. This is a good first step, but we need help in gathering funds through the Friends of GRSP and our friends in the community to gather funding for the new construction. Pledges and contributions clearly marked for the Bird Blind Fund can be sent to The Friends of GRSP, 3350 Park Road 31, Spring Branch, Texas 78070 and will be acknowledged (see box above) in future editions of the Friends quarterly newsletter.



Continued...

By Craig Hensley, Park Interpreter

I do want to do another birding fundraiser in the spring – either a total number of golden-cheeked warblers in a day or total number of species in a spring day – haven’t yet decided.

Susan & Jack Bogle	Rosemary & Clifford Hendrick	Ed Rogers
Coco Brennan	Patsy & Tom Inglet	Kathryn Rosebear
Mary Campobello & Sandra Strother	Honey & Bruce Jones	Cheryl Smith
Julie Crouch	Kip Kiphart	Jennifer Sorenson
Glenna & Joel Dunnington	Deborah and Robby Kyrouac	Anne & Jim Teeling III
Nancy & Phil Fitzpatrick	Mary & Tom Mathey	Darlene & Doug Varga
Eva Fromme	Shannon & Justin Moore	Lisa Whitehead
Jana & Greg Gibbons	Jan & J.W. Pieper	Carol Wilson
Linda Gindler & John Prentice	Lois & Patrick Ricci Jr.	Pam and Roy Yarnold

Contributors to the Planned New Bird Blind

News from the Park

By Laura Horner, Park Trainee

Park Host/Friends Field Trip to LBJ Ranch State Park

On Monday February 8th something interesting happened. First, let me set the tone. Picture a giant 15 passenger van, a super cold and windy morning and bunch of excited adults. As an appreciation for everyone’s hard work and dedication to the park, and with the blessing of the bosses (thank you Scott and Joel), I was able to arrange for a visit to LBJ Ranch State Park for park host and friends group members. Eleven of us piled into the van and off we went up Hwy 281 to Stonewall, Texas. Also, I had a few of surprises for everyone once we arrived at the park.



Once we arrived at the park Audrey Muntz, TPWD State Parks Volunteer Coordinator, was there to join us for the visit. She was able to meet all who came along for the visit and express her sincere gratitude towards everyone for all their hard work and dedication they do. Iris Neffendorf and Paul Hendrix, superintendent and assistant superintendent of LBJ Ranch SP, greeted us once we arrived, welcomed us to the park and gave us some background information about the park and the farm.

One of my surprises was that I had arranged for a guided tour of the Sauer-Beckham farm from park interpreters. They walked us through both houses on the farm and talked to us about the history of the family, farm and the area. We learned about lard and all its interesting usages on the farm. All of us crammed into the tiny kitchen while their park hosts were eating lunch and chatted with them. We were able to experience something that the general public does not get too. Another one of my surprises was we were able to continue on to the driving tour of LBJ National Park. We were able to see the sights of the grounds of the Texas White House and poke our heads into the visitor center on site.

From all of us at Guadalupe River State Park we sincerely appreciate all your hard work and dedication to this state park and state natural area. Thank you!

P.S. Stay tuned I may have more surprises-Laura

News from the Park

By Craig Hensley

With the approach of spring, park staff is gearing up for a very busy spring and summer season. The river is flowing nicely right now, the early warm up has wildflowers showing their colors and birds are singing away. Needless to say, we anticipate a productive year.

Also, with the additional monies being given to TPWD Guadalupe River State Park will be getting a facelift of its restroom facilities over the course of the next two years, with the restrooms and showers in Cedar Sage and Turkey Sink camping loops being replaced, as well as the restrooms in day use. Timing of these major renovations is still being worked out but we will be sure to keep you updated.

The current bird feeding area is nearing completion of a renovation, as well. The Friends Group has provided the funding and Park Hosts Austin Newton and Paul Freeman have been doing a complete facelift of the blind while volunteers John Prentice and Linda Gindler have been donating their time to renovating completely the water feature along with constructing and installing a small storage shed for bird seed and related equipment. We'll share photos of the completed project with the next newsletter.

If you are looking for a great way to spend the day this spring, consider visiting us at YOUR Texas state park.

Upcoming programs at Guadalupe River State Park

by Craig Hensley

Join us for one or more of these programs and look for more throughout the winter months by checking the Park's web page: <http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us/state-parks/guadalupe-river>.

Bird in the Hand Saturday, March 12, 2016 9 a.m.-Noon Guadalupe River State Park
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).

Bats of Texas Saturday, March 12, 2016 7- 8:30 p.m. Guadalupe River State Park
Join our Park Ranger for a presentation on our only flying mammals. You'll learn what's true and what's not about our bats and who's who among Texas bats. We'll even take a short walk to listen for them using a bat detector. Meet 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).

Spring Break-Who Goes There? – Honey Creek Monday, March 14, 2016 9-10:30 a.m. Guadalupe River State Park
While we don't always see them, creatures of all kinds leave behind signs of their presence. Join our Park Rangers for a walk on the wild side into Honey Creek State Natural Area as we search for tracks and other traces of the critters that call this place home. Please meet at the Rust House. This program is FREE with a Park Pass or a \$7 daily pass (children 12 and under are free).

Spring Break-Archery in the Park Tuesday, March 15, 2016 9-10:30 a.m. & 1-2:30 p.m. Guadalupe River State Park
Join trained archery instructors Craig Hensley and Laura Horner for a basic archery program. You will learn the 11 steps to archery success, receive a thorough safety orientation and practice your newly learned skills at our archery range. This program is for ages 10 and up. We will take the first 25 people on a first-come-first-served basis for each session. We provide all the equipment. This program is FREE with a Park Pass or a \$7 daily pass (children 12 and under are free). Please meet at the Rust House.

Spring Break-Bird in the Hand Wednesday, March 16, 2016 9 a.m.-Noon Guadalupe River State Park
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).

Spring Break-Geocaching 101 Thursday, March 17, 2016 9-10:30 a.m. Guadalupe River State Park
Join our Park Rangers to learn how to use a GPS unit to geocache. Described by some as a "worldwide treasure hunt," geocaching can be done in the park, throughout Texas – even worldwide. We'll provide the GPS units and instruction; you'll then practice your newly acquired skills on our practice course. This program is limited to the first ten families/people that sign up. Please email Ranger Craig at craig.hensley@tpwd.texas.gov to sign up. Please plan to meet at the amphitheater, located behind the Discovery Center. This program is FREE with a Park Pass or \$7 daily pass (children 12 and under are free).

Spring Break-Outdoor Cooking Skills 101 Friday, March 18, 2016 9-10:30 a.m. & 1-2:30 p.m. Guadalupe River State Park
NEW program here at the park. Come learn the basic of outdoor cooking in a Dutch oven and a little history too. Please be aware that this program is limited to the first five families/people that sign up for each session. Please bring a spoon and a plate for sampling the goodies that we make. There will be some recipes to take home with you. Please email Ranger Laura at laura.horner@tpwd.texas.gov to sign up. Please meet at the Rust House. This program is FREE with a Park Pass or a \$7 daily pass (children 12 and under are free).



Upcoming programs at Guadalupe River State Park

by Craig Hensley

Spring Break - Wildflower Walkabout Friday, March 18, 2016 10 a.m.-Noon Guadalupe River State Park
Join Craig Hensley, Park Ranger at Guadalupe River State Park for a walk in search of spring wildflowers along the trails. Please meet at the Park headquarters. Be sure to bring water and wear sturdy shoes and a hat. This program is free with a Park Pass or a \$7 daily pass (children ages 12 and under are free). We will meet at the Park Headquarters.

Insect Safari Saturday, March 19, 2016 9:30-11 a.m. Guadalupe River State Park
Join our Park Rangers 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.

Stories in the Stars Saturday, March 19, 2016 8-10 p.m. Guadalupe River State Park
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 Saturday, March 26, 2016 10-11:30 a.m. & 2-3:30 p.m. Guadalupe River State Park
Archery is one of the safest outdoor activities and here is your chance to learn this wonderful outdoor skill at Guadalupe River State Park. You will have the opportunity to learn the skill of archery through a disciplined approach. We'll take the first 25 people on a first-come, first-serve basis for each time slot. Please email laura.horner@tpwd.texas.gov if you have questions. We provide all the equipment. Please note this is for persons ages 10 and up. This program is free with a Park Pass or \$7 daily pass (children ages 12 and under are free). Please meet at the Rust House.

A Froggin' We Will Go Saturday, March 26, 2016 8-9:30 p.m. Guadalupe River State Park
Join Park Ranger Laura for a look at the world of frogs and toads. Following a presentation at the Amphitheater behind the Discovery Center, you'll head to the river in search of the frogs and toads themselves. This program is free with a Park Pass or a \$7 daily pass (children ages 12 and under are free).

2016 Dues

by Bill Beach

2016 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 2016 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

**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!**