



Winter 2017 NEWSLETTER

Friends of Guadalupe River, Honey Creek, Inc.

A non-profit organization

Halloween in the Park 2017

by Tom Anderson

Board of Directors



This year's Halloween in the Park was a very happy and successful one. The weather cooperated and we were able to have the 14th annual Halloween in the Park! The turnout was great, approximately over 500 people total. Beside the gate count, there were many people already in the Park that were not included in the tally.



The day of the event went very smoothly thanks to park personnel and park hosts who took care of parking, lighting, set up, and efficiently handling the

attendees along with assisting the Friends group throughout the day. Always a favorite is storyteller, Sue Kuntz and her helpers. Their Halloween ghost stories kept the groups thoroughly entertained while they waited for their time to enter the haunted trail.

There were many folks that helped with trail lights and decorations. This year J.W. Pieper worked at getting the lights out along the trail along with the help of a high school student. The Bill Beach and Dave Kibler and friends helped decorate the front area along with assembling an eerie, misty graveyard. The perfect dramatic entrance to the haunted trail!

The haunted trail is manned by a very special group of volunteers; the station sponsors. There are people, families, organizations and businesses who are responsible for the making

the haunted trail an awesome experience. Some of the families that took stations this year Genie and David Dashiell, Laura Cantu, Catherine Gauldin's group, the Platz's, the Thode family, the Macapura's, the Couteau's, and the Young's who manned the Camero & Friends stations. Several of the very dedicated groups are scouts. They have come back year after year. Some of these are Girl Scout troop #848, troop #1136 and troop #1458, Explorer Post 285. A new comer this year was Tejas Teens and Bulverde 4-H. Other very dedicated groups are Cordillera Nature Club, Broadway Bank and the Bulverde Spring Branch Library. We are very happy that McDonalds, G.V.T.C. & H.E.B are a big part of the Haunted trail; in addition a newcomer Grandpa's plumbing. Other Texas Parks & Wildlife parks also came to join us. South Llano River came with Ranger Holly Platz & Will & Thea Platz...



Many of these groups consider Halloween in the Park to be like an annual family event. To all sponsors, we thank you; you are the backbone of the Event!

A favorite part of the Halloween event is being able to enjoy refreshments at no extra charge. This due to H.E.B.'s very generous donation! Tom Anderson is

responsible for our long standing relationship with H.E.B. along with many other aspects of the Halloween event.

This year we had a new volunteer, Barrett Durst, park superintendent, doing the cooking Returning was the group of food volunteers: Carole Anderson, Judy & Dave Kibler, Joan Nitschke, Bill Beach. New this year and much

appreciated were C. Mackensie and Charlene Brown, Debbie and Rob Kyrouac. A special thanks to Kraft Foods for having their Kool-Aid mascot present. These were the people that assembled the food and served the condiments, drinks and chips.

To everyone who helped and participated The Friends of the park THANK YOU.



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Trails to the Past

by Bryden Moon

At the Threshold of the Rust House - 100th Year Anniversary Henry and Louise Mueller Rust

With its construction pegged in 1917, our park's Rust House entered its 100th anniversary year. Unfortunately our planned celebrations for the 100-year-old, along with our spring Homesteader Homecoming, were washed out by threat of thunderstorms earlier this year. Yet, still in the year of the Rust House's 100th anniversary, we are able to honor the Rust house's namesakes - Heinrich Rust and his wife, Louise, who were the only family to ever pioneer the central stretch of our prime Guadalupe River State Park land and were also the only family who ever lived in the house. Today we'll center on 1917 and then look backward to capture the details of Heinrich's family's German immigrant roots and his early pathway through the Hill Country, saving the details of Heinrich's young adulthood and later family life for our next edition.

In 1917 our president was Woodrow Wilson, our governor, James Ferguson, and our U. S. senators were Charles Culberson and Morris Sheppard. Because Sheppard authored the Eighteenth Amendment and introduced it in the Senate, he is referred to as "the father of national Prohibition." And as a by-product of his legislation, he unintentionally helped to usher bootlegging into the Hill Country. However, in a typical Texas political twist, during the Prohibition era, a still that produced 130 gallons of moonshine per day was discovered on a Texas ranch that Sheppard owned.

During 1917 the U. S. entered the on-going "war to end all wars," World War I, when on April 2nd President Wilson declared war on Germany. On June 4 of 1917 the very first Pulitzer prizes were awarded. There were 48 stars on the U.S. flag, Alaska and Hawaii weren't admitted as states until over forty years later. Think things might have been just a little slower, with more elbow room? Comparing 1917's statistics to today's numbers, we'll let the population numbers speak for themselves. Please note **Comal County's growth.**

100 Year Census Shift

| | 1917 | 2017 | Growth % |
|---------------|-------------|--------------|----------|
| United States | 103 million | 323 million | 214% |
| Texas | 4.5 million | 27.8 million | 518% |
| Comal County | 8,500 | 130,000+ | 1429% |



Friedrich Wilhelm Rust
Texas Family Patriarch

Since 1917 is more than a midway point in the lives of the 100 year-old Rust house's eponymous homesteaders, Heinrich (or Henry) and Louise Mueller Rust, we'll turn back the clock and reach back to the Rust family's origins in the old country followed by their early days in Texas.

Going back two centuries, Heinrich Rust's father, Friedrich Wilhelm Rust, the patriarch of the Rust family in our region, was born in Hannover, Germany in 1816.

The Friedrich Rust family, including wife Wilhelmine, came to Texas in 1855. Upon arriving at the coast they ventured by wagon inland to the German settlement of New Braunfels. On the 1860 **New Braunfels** census Friedrich Rust and his wife are listed along with 6 children. Heinrich Rust wasn't listed. However, it was simply a matter of timing, since the census was taken on August 23rd, and Heinrich was born nearly 3 months later. In 1864, the family relocated between Spring Branch and Smithson Valley to an area later called Guadalupe Valley.

Continued...

Trails to the Past

by Bryden Moon

Guadalupe Valley was one of a constellation of small pockets of rural community that have been lost to time, just like Schiller, Panther Creek and Curry's Creek in Kendall County and Wesson and even Anhalt & Honey Creek in Comal County. In her book, *Bridging Spring Branch*, Brenda Anderson-Lindemann discusses the Guadalupe Valley region: **"This small settlement is located in northwestern Comal County about three miles downstream from Esser's Crossing on the Rebecca Creek Road."** The old Guadalupe Valley region is not far from Guadalupe River State Park, its western edge 6 to 7 miles due east as the crow flies.



Guadalupe Valley 6 Miles Due East of GRSP

Due to the influence of the Guadalupe River as both a boundary and barricade, the Guadalupe Valley's domain, regardless of the river's twist and turns, was always south or east of the of Guadalupe River. Generally serving as a watery barrier, the few beaches in the Guadalupe River were important. And the Guadalupe Valley river crossing had many names, as Brenda relates, **"It was originally named Schertz Crossing after Sebastian Schertz, who later founded Schertz, Texas. During the early years, the crossing was known as Remmler's Crossing for the early pioneer Gabriel Remmler. The name was changed in recent years to Rebecca Creek Crossing."**

Brenda writes that **"early settlers who came to the rich Guadalupe River Valley area were Gabriel Remmler, Andreas Geier, Peter Becker, Carl Elbel, Henry Jonas, Carl Schultz, Friedrich Oppermann, Carl Mueller, of course Friedrich Wilhelm Rust (Henry Rust's father), and two of Henry's older brothers, Gustav and August Rust."**

The community developed social networks, per Brenda, **"The area also supported Guadalupe Valley Singing Club and the Guadalupe Valley Rifle Club..."** Brenda tells me that the Rusts were active in the shooting club. **"The community was first served by a private school and later developed into the Guadalupe Valley Public School. Early school trustees were listed as Henry Startz, Peter Becker and Henry Jonas."** One of our Homesteaders, Carmen Rittimann, at one time attended the Guadalupe Valley Public School.

| | | | | | |
|-----|-----|----------------|----|---|---|
| 762 | 788 | Rust Friedrich | 54 | M | W |
| | | — Wilhelm | 51 | M | W |
| | | — Otto | 19 | M | W |
| | | — Alwine | 17 | F | W |
| | | — Dorothea | 14 | F | W |
| | | ★ Gustav | 12 | M | W |
| | | — Heinrich | 10 | M | W |

1870 Smithson Valley Census

By 1870, Friedrich Rust and his family show up on the **Smithson Valley** census and Heinrich at 10 is the youngest of 5 siblings. 1870 census neighbors are Haufler, Becker, and Jonas. Next edition we'll follow Heinrich and his family into his adulthood, marriage and final move to our GRSP lands.

There are more stories to be told!

Nature opportunities at the Park

by Linda Gindler

Come on out – the birding is GREAT

With winter just around the corner, the park is changing once again. Tree leaves drop, grasses brown, and flowers retreat giving the park a bit less color and more open feel. We often think of birds heading south to Central and South America during the winter, but plenty of birds that spend spring and summer in the northern extremes of North America head south only as far as Texas to winter. So the park is alive with our winter feathered friends...especially sparrows. Some sparrows are at the park year round (lark sparrow, chipping, and field sparrows all come to mind), but the park welcomes a number of other sparrow species just for the winter. With less vegetation interfering with viewing and cooler temperatures making a hike more enjoyable, winter is a great time to visit the park and enjoy the sparrow family since the park has so many to seek out. Some birding enthusiasts find sparrows difficult to identify and refer to them only as "little brown birds". Still others have learned that with a little patience, observers can be rewarded with beautiful intricate feather patterns that only Mother Nature can create.

Start your search for a Lincoln Sparrow. Lincolns forage on or near the ground so look low. They rarely stray far from dense cover and tend to like moist areas. Mostly they are solitary so you will only find one at a time. The bird blind and surrounding area (including the River Overlook & Bald Cypress Trails) are good places to look. This sparrow has intricate brown and gray patterns. Look for a brown crown with gray central stripe, pale eye-ring, buffy mustachial strip and fine streaking down its buffy breast and sides. Lincoln sparrows prefer insects and you can find them scratching under trees and shrubs to stir up their prey. But they will also eat seed from ground feeders and occasionally visit the bird blind.



Lincoln Sparrow (photo by John Prentice)

Your first impression of a white-crowned sparrow might be that it is just another dull gray bird, but then it turns and you get a view of the striking black & white crown with its pink to orange bill. That's when you know you have one of Mother Nature's wonders. White-crowned sparrows are common winter park visitors and can be found in small flocks in brushy borders and open savannahs. Look for them along the main park road as well as the Painted Bunting Trail. They like grass seeds and insects so look on the ground up to about 3 feet to find them.



White-crowned Sparrow (photo by John Prentice)



Nature opportunities at the Park

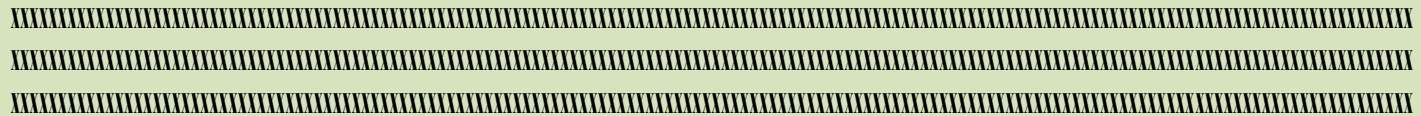
by Linda Gindler

The Spotted Towhee may not look like your typical sparrow, but they are part of the sparrow family and are one of the rock stars of the park during the winter. This handsome bird can be found in open shrubby habitat with thick undergrowth. Look along the Painted Bunting, Prairie, and Oak Savannah trails. Look low as they feed on the ground scratching to uncover insects. They are a large sparrow (7-8 inches), with a striking black head, rufous sides, and white belly making them unmistakable. Take time to watch Towhees while they search for insects. They scratch at leaf litter with a two-footed backward hop, and then pounce on whatever they have uncovered. It is a delightful dance.



Spotted Towhee (photo by John Prentice)

If you are not sure you can find one of these special sparrows, come out for one of Ranger Craig's bird programs. Programs include bird hikes, ID workshops, and the very popular "Bird in Hand" program. It's an up close look at our feathered friends. "Bird in Hand" is the first Saturday of each month January-May 2018 (9:00 a.m. to noon) at the Discovery Center Amphitheater. All programs are subject to cancellation or time changes. Contact the park for current details or watch for updates on Facebook.



2018 Homesteader Homecoming

Please mark your calendar...for **2:00 on Sunday, April 29th**

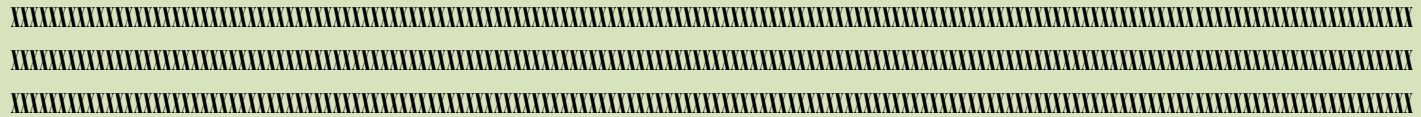
At **Guadalupe River State Park's Rust House**

Celebrate the Guadalupe River State Park's 35th Birthday

Learn about early settlers **Henry and Louise Rust**

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.



Public Hunts in the Park

by Felicia Lopez

Public Hunts in the park: A brief history

This is the time of year lots of folks get excited. Excited for what? Well, hunting season of course! Since what would later become T.P.W.D's first drawn hunt at the Kerr WMA in 1954, we as an agency have been extending our outdoor recreation provisions to include these regulated hunts. Presently, the Wildlife Division's mission is to manage and conserve the natural and cultural resources of Texas and to provide hunting, fishing and outdoor recreation opportunities for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations. To accomplish this mission, Division personnel annually conduct about 2,100 wildlife population surveys, maintain scientific databases, analyze data, conduct about 75 wildlife research studies, manage 51 wildlife management areas totaling 755,000 acres, hold public hunts

on more than 200 tracts of land totaling more than 1.4 million acres, inform the public about wildlife, and issue about 1,500 permits of various kinds to take or hold wildlife.

The agency's first drawn hunt hosted at a State Park was Pedernales Falls in 1971. Here at GRSP we hosted our first hunt shortly after our acquisition in 1983, and continue to this day. All groups go through a brief orientation, then right to their designated blinds in hopes of bagging the big one! This week's lucky group was for youth hunters. They got to post up in blinds on the 670-acre portion of the park known as Bauer Unit.

**The Boy Scout Troop**

by Dave Kibler

On Saturday, 21 October, thirty-eight enthusiastic Scouts and adult volunteers from Boy Scout Troop 285, sponsored by Coker Methodist Church in San Antonio, returned to the park for the twentieth time to perform service work and to make improvements at the park. The work performed this time involved continuing the on-going project of removing Ashe juniper growth in the eastern portion of the Honey Creek State Natural Area near the Doeppenschmidt House, which was founded in 1871, off Spring Branch Road. Work that morning consisted of the removal of vegetation which had overgrown the house and the barns at the farm site. Much progress was made in removing several large hackberry trees, as well as many Ashe junipers in the area around these historic buildings. Volunteers displayed their spirit of cheerful service in performing this work for the park.



The Scouts followed this with an afternoon of Scout learning activities, as well as kayaking on the river. And many of the Scouts and dads camped overnight near the historic house. The boys and adults of Troop 285 always look forward to this semi-annual service project as a way to demonstrate their Scout Spirit and will return to Guadalupe River State Park in the spring of 2018.



Honey Creek Interpretive Guide Training

by Nancy Gray

The Friends group is excited to report that a group of people who like to share their love of nature with others have started training to become new Honey Creek interpretive guides. Twelve well qualified prospective new guides began with a session on Sunday, November 12. The meeting started with a discussion of the expectations and responsibilities of a Honey Creek guide and an explanation of the process to become a certified guide. Then Craig Hensley, the park's interpretive ranger, led a great session on interpretive techniques and skills. Rain prevented the planned short hike but Craig demonstrated some of those skills outdoors. Each person was given an electronic copy of material that covers a number of topics specific to Honey Creek's flora, fauna and cultural history as well as interpretive techniques. Everyone will study the material provided on an individual basis and then assist regular Honey Creek hikes. Each candidate will assist on three or more hikes and then when they are ready, lead a hike. We welcome the addition of new guides and know they will each bring their own particular knowledge and style to the Honey Creek hikes.

2018 Dues

by Bill Beach

2018 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 2018 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!**