

Citizens working to preserve and enhance the state park system for the benefit of the people of Texas and their guests.



The Voice, Online – TfSP E-News

June-July 2012

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President John Cobb is currently recuperating from foot surgery to repair a service-related deterioration of the bone in his big toe from shrapnel 43 years ago. We wish John a full and speedy recovery!

In lieu of a message from John, see his Featured Park of the Quarter, Lake Colorado City State Park on our website: www.texansforstateparks.org. Click on the Featured Parks link at the top of the home page to see other featured parks programs developed by John.

Coca Cola's "America Is Your Park" Promotion – Disappointing for Bastrop

Coca Cola's "America Is Your Park" promotion, is coming to a close July 15 with Bastrop now ranked 11th, far behind the leaders. The \$100,000 Coca-Cola Grant will go to the park with the most votes. Coca-Cola's "Live Positively" initiative also awards a \$50,000 and \$25,000 grant to the next two runners-up in votes received. In addition, one of the remaining top 25 vote-getters will be selected in a random drawing to receive a \$15,000 grant.

A last major effort might possibly move up Bastrop up to a runner up position. Otherwise the best we can hope for is to have enough votes to keep Bastrop in the top 25 for a chance at the \$15,000 grant in the random drawing. You can see the vote totals for the leaders, and continue to vote at www.livepositively.com/parks until July 15th.

Palo Pinto Mountains State Park: A new State Park in Dallas/Fort Worth Area

Parks and Wildlife closed on the purchase of 3,333 acres of Cross Timbers region ranch land from several different owners in early November for property that straddles the Palo Pinto and Stephens county line near the town of Strawn. The land sits just a few miles north of Interstate 20, and will be used for a future state park site after TPWD spent the last few years exploring land in Johnson, Bosque, Erath, Hood, Parker, Palo Pinto and Tarrant counties. The state purchased three contiguous tracts composed of two ranches, and a 42-acre in-holding, located roughly an hour's drive west of downtown Fort Worth.

Funds for the purchase come from the \$9.2 million netted from sale in 2008 of the former Eagle Mountain Lake State Park, which was purchased by an array of private and public donors and is now a local park. The sale of the Eagle Mountain Lake site was done with the explicit understanding that the proceeds would be used to acquire another state park within 90 miles of downtown Fort Worth. The Legislative Budget Board also had signed off on the use of the Eagle Mountain property sales proceeds to purchase land for a new north Texas state park.

The department says that it will take some time to complete a master plan to guide public use and development of the site, which due to limited resources to staff and operate the park, might

take several years to open. When the gates of Texas' newest state park do swing open, Smith believes the state's investment "will pay recreational and conservation dividends for generations to come."

The future state park property is rich in natural resources, fronting two miles on the north fork of Palo Pinto Creek and consisting of diverse topography ranging from hilltop vistas to riparian forests. The land is home to plentiful wildlife, including the endangered golden-cheeked warbler.

Lake Texana Management Reverts to the Lavaca Navidad River Authority

The Texas Parks and Wildlife Department has informed the Lavaca Navidad River Authority that it plans to terminate the lease of LNRA property that provides for Lake Texana State Park, subject to formal action of the Texas Parks and Wildlife Commission and concurrence by the LNRA Board of Directors. LNRA officials have indicated that they will take over operation of the park when the lease is terminated.

TPWD cited the ongoing funding shortfall brought about by reduced state park appropriations and last year's record heat, drought and wildfires, which caused a precipitous drop in park visitation and revenues across the state.

TPWD has operated the 575-acre park under a 50-year lease originally executed in 1977 with the Bureau of Reclamation/LNRA and amended in 2003 with a restated lease agreement with LNRA. The state park, which opened to the public in 1981, provides public access to 10,000-acre Lake Texana that provides fishing, boating and other recreational opportunities for more than 40,000 visitors each year.

Vaquero Exhibit at Goliad State Park

Beginning July 1, 2012, Goliad State Park will present "Vaquero: Genesis of the Texas Cowboy," an exhibition featuring 62 digital carbon prints with bilingual narrative text that reveal the muscle, sweat and drama that went into roping a calf in thick brush or breaking a wild horse in the saddle.

In the early 1970s, noted Texas historian Joe Frantz offered Bill Wittliff a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to visit a ranch in northern Mexico where the vaqueros still worked cattle in traditional ways. Wittliff photographed the vaqueros as they went about daily chores that had changed little since the first Mexican cowherders learned to work cattle from a horse's back. Wittliff captured a way of life that now exists only in memory and in the photographs included in this exhibition.

"Vaquero: Genesis of the Texas Cowboy," was created by the Wittliff Collections at the Alkek Library, Texas State University-San Marcos, and presented in partnership with Humanities Texas, the state affiliate for the National Endowment for the Humanities. This exhibition is made possible in part by a *We the People* grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities.

The exhibition will be available to the public from July 1, 2012 to July 31, 2012. For more information about viewing hours or to arrange group visits, contact Goliad State Park at (361) 645-3405.

McKinney Falls State Park Opens Site-Specific Twitter Account

McKinney Falls State Park has become the first state park in Texas to open a site-specific Twitter account. The new twitter account, *@McKinneyFalls* will provide followers with information on special park events, wildlife trivia and general and emergency park operation information. To follow McKinney Falls State Park visit <https://twitter.com/#!/McKinneyFalls>. The Texas Parks and Wildlife Department already has several agency-wide twitter accounts geared toward various interests such as hunting or and bass fishing. For information on all TPWD social media visit www.tpwd.state.tx.us/socialmedia/.

TPWD Calendar: For coming park events in your area, visit TPWD's calendar section at www.tpwd.state.tx.us/calendar/

New Residents Arrive at Caprock Canyons State Park: Prairie Dog Relocation is Latest Phase for Habitat Restoration at Panhandle Area Park.

There's a new town along the Texas Panhandle Plains near Quitaque, and much like the pioneer predecessors who arrived hundreds of years before, the residents of this new unincorporated settlement arrived with little fanfare, minimal provisions, and will build meager, basic living accommodations for their families. Likewise, they come seeking only a new frontier of freedom and embody a primal spirit of survival.

On June 28, 29 Black-tailed Prairie Dogs were reintroduced to Caprock Canyons State Park's Honey Flat area as part of a prairie restoration project to return the park's landscape and wildlife back to its appearance prior to European settlement.

"This is the latest phase in our attempts to restore this prairie ecosystem," said Donald Beard, Caprock Canyons State Park superintendent. "Restoring the Texas State Bison Herd into the park will probably always be the flagship of our effort, but our plans also include bringing back other animals and native plants to make the land more complete. Adding a prairie dog town is one more part of that, and it will add another popular wildlife viewing opportunity for park visitors."

For more, see www.tpwd.state.tx.us/newsmedia/releases/?req=20120709a.

Repaired Battleship TEXAS Reopens

The *Battleship TEXAS State Historic Site* near La Porte recently reopened to the public after being closed since June 24 for repairs to fix leaks in the historic vessel's metal hull. The latest round of leaks began on June 9, which ship employees described as worse leaks with higher water inflow than anything they'd experienced in the last 15 years. Since then, TPWD has hired salvage and dive team and oil cleanup contractors to help repair leaks and pump water out of Blister tanks on the ship's outer hull. Costs for these repairs are close to \$1 million and expected to rise.

TPWD is still assessing options for the ship's long-term future. But one thing seems clear: moving it is not feasible, a fact underscored by the recent situation. Ship surveys by outside experts Proceanic in 2008 and AECOMM in 2011 strongly recommended against towing the ship any significant distance. In keeping with a master plan for the entire San Jacinto Battleground, TPWD has been exploring a permanent solution to dry berth the ship on site.

To see the entire article regarding the future of the Battleship on the TPWD website, click on [Repaired Battleship TEXAS Reopens Saturday \[Print – Plain Text – Permalink\]](#)

Don't forget to send e-mail or other address changes to leevans@texas.net so you will continue to receive news and information about the State Park System.

Selected news items from various sources are edited and forwarded by Texans for State Parks. If you have news or an event you would like to include, send it to leevans@texas.net.

Texans for State Parks – P. O. Box 41480 - Austin, TX 78704-0025

www.Texansstateparks.org

PLEASE JOIN TODAY!

(See application below)

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Business Affiliations are provided for information purposes only.



Citizens working to preserve and enhance the state park system for the benefit of the people of Texas and their guests.

PLEASE JOIN TODAY!

TEXANS FOR STATE PARKS invites you to join with us in protecting our Texas treasures.

Whether you are an individual, organization, school group or represent a small business or a major corporation, membership categories provide a way for you to become involved. For information and a membership application, see www.texasstateparks.org or e-mail leevans@texas.net.

As a member, you will ---

- ✓ Add your voice in support of the Texas State Park System.
- ✓ Receive “The Voice” – E-news keeping you informed of issues and events.
- ✓ Contribute toward activities, events and projects not possible in park budgets.
- ✓ Receive information about legislation and other issues impacting Texas parks.

Individuals

- ___\$25 Regular
- ___\$50 Family
- ___\$100 Supporting
- ___\$1,000 Benefactor
- ___\$5,000 Life

Organizations

- ___\$50 Bronze
- ___\$100 Silver
- ___\$250 Gold
- ___\$1,000 Platinum
- ___\$25 Youth Groups under age 18

Business

- ___\$100 Bronze
- ___\$500 Silver
- ___\$1,000 Gold
- ___\$5,000 Platinum

\$ _____ **Additional Donation**

\$ _____ **Total Amount Enclosed**

Please note: New member _____

Membership Renewal _____

Name _____ **Address** _____

City _____ **State** _____ **Zip** _____ **Phone (H)** _____ **(Bs)** _____

Fax _____ **E-mail** _____

Do you wish to receive TfSP E-news? _____ **Yes** _____ **No**

I don't have e-mail. Please put me on a list to receive e-news items by mail. _____

Texans for State Parks is a 501(c)(3) organization; membership dues are tax deductible.

Mail your check today to: Texans for State Parks, P. O. Box 41480, Austin, TX 78704-0025

Goals

- *Provide a united, state-wide voice for users of state parks and related groups on park matters of shared concerns.*
- *Serve as an information resource for interested persons on state park matters.*
- *Educate park users, legislators and the general public about state park matters.*
- *Support stable and adequate financing for the state park system.*
- *Work in partnership with local state park support groups and other interested groups on state park matters.*
- *Advise the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department and Commission on State-wide matters of importance to state park users and related groups.*