



# Texas Rivers

## Annual Newsletter, 2015

Texas Rivers Protection Association 444 Pecan Park Dr. San Marcos TX 78666

[www.txrivers.org](http://www.txrivers.org)

### Goodbye to Another River

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If you have never had the opportunity to read "Goodbye to a River" by John Graves, you owe it to yourself to find a copy as soon as possible and enjoy it. Mr. Graves was saying goodbye, about 50 years ago, to a section of the Brazos River where several dams were to be built. We are being forced to say goodbye to our favorite section of the San Marcos River. The problem on the San Marcos has nothing to do with the Corps of Engineers; the problem here is that a whole lot of people are getting very drunk while tubing the river and their misbehavior is making it impossible for other folks to use the river.

Unless you have visited this river recently on a warm summer afternoon, you simply have no idea how bad things have become. But to give you an example of a particularly bad day - the Sunday afternoon of Labor Day Weekend 2014 - we had over 7,000 tubers - most of them very inebriated - tubing past our campground (San Marcos River Retreat; just downstream of Westerfield Crossing). We knew it was going to be bad, so we were closed to the public as was my neighbor, TG Canoes and Kayaks. There was no way to get a canoe or kayak down the river, and we had offered our gravel bar and campground to the Caldwell County Sheriff's Department so they could set up a command center to "keep the peace" on the river. They had a helicopter on site, as well as an ambulance and an air-conditioned command center.

The tubers were on their best behavior while they tubed past our gravel bar; after all, the word got out that there was a major police presence there. But a few folks who braved the river in kayaks (to monitor the situation) told me that if you paddled a hundred yards or so upstream of the command center, the party was in full swing - with topless girls performing for beer and jello shots and with crack pipes in abundance. We have seen an increase lately in the number of inflatable sex dolls on the river; and of course, almost every group seems to have a floating boom box blasting x-rated rap music.

The tubing season started out with a "bang" last Memorial Day Weekend. It was late Saturday afternoon when a drunken tuber girl passed out on our gravel bar. Then, an opportunistic tuber guy came along, threw her over his shoulder and carried her into the middle of our campground, right in front of a group of families who had ignored my warnings to stay away that weekend. He proceeded to rape her (it's rape if the victim is unconscious, whether she agrees to file charges later or not). The families stopped him in mid stroke, the police were called, and it looks like he may eventually be indicted.

Things got so bad that I was forced to hire my own security force to keep people from taking over the gravel bar (it was not unusual for there to be 100 drunken tubers on the bar on a warm day - with lots of shotgunning of beer, rap music and some interesting dancing). Lets just say that things are not conducive to operating a Christian youth camp.

The river and its banks belong to the state; so our state is allowing this non stop party to take place on its property. If any individual or entity had regular parties like this they would be shut down for disturbing the peace. I have proposed that the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department create a "linear state park" on this section of river. Other states have done it. The state already owns the land, and it would be a park that requires no superintendent, no facilities and no employees. The main thing it would change is that the public display or consumption of alcohol would be prohibited. The party would end. There is legislation introduced this session to create a Water Oriented Recreation District to help solve our problem. But I am concerned that such a district will only tax all river users to collect some money for clean ups and police. All it takes is a short drive on River Road on the Guadalupe to see that a WORD won't stop the party. I fear that it may be time to say goodbye to another river.

Tom Goynes, president.

## TRPA Financial Report 2014

### General Fund:

Beginning Balance 1/1/2014	\$33,872.57
Plus contributions for 2014	12,865.00
Plus interest received	21.50
Subtotal general fund	\$46,759.07
Less general expenses:	
Austin Youth River Watch	2,000.00
Bumper Stickers	1,114.00
Amicus Brief New Braunfels can ban	1,000.00
Save Our Springs Alliance	1,000.00
Don Greene's Plaque	808.00
Springs Stewardship Institute	800.00
Medina River Clean Up	250.00
Postage	224.73
Linear Park Slideshow	211.14
Newsletter	120.40
Office Supplies	32.97
Total general expenses	\$7,561.24
Total general fund 12/31/2014	\$39,197.83

### Hidalgo Falls Fund 2014

Money earmarked for Hidalgo Falls 1/1/14	\$4,502.94
Contributions received for Hidalgo Falls	1,015.00
Total money available	\$5,517.94
Less Expenses:	
Property tax (2013)	612.04
Property tax (2014)	704.23
Maintenance	222.67
Bank Fees	61.45
Total expenses	1,600.39
Total money available 12/31/14	\$3,917.55

### River Road Fund 2014

Beginning Balance, 1/1/14	\$200.13
Ending balance 12/31/14	\$200.13

### Center Point Rockcrusher Fund 2014

Beginning Balance 1/1/14	\$3,950.58
Ending Balance, 12/31/14	\$3,950.58

### Center Point Lion's Park 2014

Beginning Balance 1/1/14	\$100.00
Ending Balance 12/31/14	\$100.00

### Mike Ash Memorial 2014

Beginning Balance 1/1/14	\$225.00
Contributions Received 2014	125.00
Ending Balance 12/31/14	\$350.00

### San Marcos River Bad Tuber Fund 2014

Beginning Balance 1/1/14	\$0
Contributions Received 2014	1,500.00
Ending Balance 12/31/14	\$1,500.00

### Don Greene Plaque 2014

Contributions	\$400.00
Transfer from general fund	808.00
Payment for Plaque	1,208.00
Ending balance	0

## News

**Hidalgo Falls Fund:** Since April 2001, canoeists, kayakers, and river lovers have been donating money and time to purchase and maintain 13 acres of land at Hidalgo Falls on the

Brazos River. Now there is a restroom and camping area for TRPA members to enjoy. For more info see the TRPA website.

**River Road Fund:** The State of Texas is considering allowing an interstate type highway to be constructed across the Guadalupe River along River Road. We have set up a fund to help the locals defeat this project. You can read more at: <http://www.save-river-road.net/>

**Rockcrusher Fund:** Several years ago a company called Wheatcraft applied for an air quality permit for a rockcrusher on the banks of the Guadalupe River and right in the middle of the town of Center Point. Partly due to our opposition, that company has temporarily withdrawn their permit application. The fund is still maintained in the event that the issue comes up again.

**Center Point Lions Park:** A group in Center Point are interested in improving a small park on the banks of the Guadalupe River.

**Mike Ash Memorial:** A fund maintained to remember an old friend of Texas Rivers. The money is periodically donated to projects that we feel Mike would have liked to support.

**San Marcos River:** There are several tubing operators on the San Marcos River that are particularly offensive when it comes to trash, noise and bad behavior. Money is being earmarked to save the river.

**Don Greene Plaque:** This past August, our good friend Don Greene passed away after a brief bout with pancreatic cancer. Don devoted his life to protecting the rivers of Texas and introducing people to those rivers. He was particularly devoted to the protection and preservation of Buffalo Bayou in Houston. The TRPA is proud to participate in the purchase of a memorial plaque for Don. The plaque will be placed near Buffalo Bayou in the near future.

**In Memory of Don Greene**

Don Greene was a staunch protector of Texas Rivers and Bayous. He had a passion for environmental education and was committed to the protection and conservation of the rivers and streams of Texas. Over the years, he used his love of rivers to introduce thousands of young Texans to the great outdoors in the canyons of the Big Bend, New Mexico, and Mexico. But his heart was always on the Buffalo Bayou. He served as president of the Buffalo Bayou Preservation Association and as a member of the Rivers Conservation Advisory Board for the state of Texas.

He was always opening our eyes to the wonders of nature - the beaver of Buffalo Bayou, the night herons of Braes Bayou, the footprints of the water birds and the raccoons on a sand bar. He explored and loved the green ribbons of life that cut across an often brown and dehydrated landscape called Texas.

As you walk along the banks or paddle the waters of the Buffalo Bayou, take a moment to give thanks for those who have fought to preserve it.

**TEXAS RIVERS PROTECTION ASSOCIATION**

## San Marcos River Clean Up

**30th Annual - March 7, 2015**

On Saturday, March 7, folks from all over Texas will be participating in the world's longest river clean up. We will be picking up trash along the entire length of the San Marcos River (approximately 90 miles). Everyone is urged to help. If you are unable to participate in the water, we need volunteers to work the banks of the river, especially at parks and highway crossings. The upper sections of the river will require the most attention, and the short mileages set for these sections reflect this. Furthermore, the river becomes less accessible and more hazardous as one goes downstream. For that reason, novice boaters should volunteer for the upper sections. The lower river, from Luling to Gonzales, has several long sections with few bridge crossings so we are asking canoe racers (especially teams that have competed in the Texas Water Safari) to volunteer for sections below Luling. Everyone participating in this event is invited to camp free at either Shady Grove Campground/ Spencer Canoes or at the San Marcos River Retreat for the weekend. Starting at 6 p.m. on Saturday evening there will be a meal provided by the San Marcos River Foundation at Shady Grove/Spencer Canoes. Canoe racers paddling the lower river will meet at Palmetto Park at 8:30 a.m. Everyone paddling the sections of river between the Thompson's Island and Luling will meet at 9:00 a.m. Saturday morning at the San Marcos River Retreat. Persons working the upper sections will meet at City Park in San Marcos at 9:30 a.m.

Tom Goynes (coordinator) 512-787-5574  
e-mail: [tomgoynes@mac.com](mailto:tomgoynes@mac.com)

### TRPA Annual Meeting

On **Sunday, March 8 at 10 a.m.** the Texas Rivers Protection Association will hold it's annual general meeting. We will meet at the Chapel at the San Marcos River Retreat.

To get to the San Marcos River Retreat: coming from Interstate 35 in San Marcos, get on Highway 80 and head toward Luling for 1.8 miles. Take a right on Old Bastrop (aka CR101, aka CR266 – it's the new traffic light right after the overpass). Take an immediate left onto county road 102. Go 1/2 mile on 102 and take a right on Pecan Park Dr. Keep going straight (past TG Canoe & Kayak) follow the road to the left to the campground gate. The chapel is the big building on your right. For more info call Tom Goynes at 512-787-5574 or visit our website at <http://www.sanmarcosriverretreat.com>



Brazos River Clean Up

## 12th Annual Brazos River Cleanup

**Saturday, April 11, 2015**

Meet at Tres Rios Campground at 9:00 A.M.

2322 County Road 312; Glen Rose, TX 76043

\*Complimentary Ranch House BBQ dinner after cleanup (served from noon - 4 pm)

\*Free canoes and shuttles provided by Low Water Canoes and Rhodes Canoes. If you want to be assured of having a canoe, reserve early. Low Water and Rhodes have less canoes to offer as they have in past years.

Cabins and RV hook ups available. Call Tres Rios for info 254-897-4253 Tell them you are with the clean up.

For tent camping info or other questions, contact: Ed Lowe w-214-358-0612, cell-214-802-6811

[elowe@celebrationrestaurant.com](mailto:elowe@celebrationrestaurant.com)

<http://www.friendsofthebrazos.org>

## Hidalgo Falls River Festival

**Saturday April 25, 2015**

The 14th annual Hidalgo Falls River Festival will be held on April 25 at the TRPA Hidalgo Falls property on the Brazos River near Navasota. The festival is the year's major fund-raising event to support our efforts to provide paddlers' access to the rapid. Paddlers, their families, and friends can explore the property, check out the tidepool-like river features, play in the rapid, have relaxing floats up and down the river, and enjoy camping for the weekend. We ask that people contribute \$10/person to help cover expenses (e.g., toilets, electricity).

Directions: <http://philosophy.tamu.edu/~sdaniel/location.html>.

During the festival, the gate, which is normally locked will remain open.

Information about the location of Hidalgo Falls, TRPA ownership, pictures of past festivals, etc. can be found at the HF website:

<http://philosophy.tamu.edu/~sdaniel/hidalgo.html>

## 17th Annual Medina River Cleanup

**Saturday, May 2, 2015**

Register: 9-12 a.m. at Bandera City Park

Maple St. and Hwy. 173 at the Medina River Dam

\* Free barbecue: 5-8 p.m. with entertainment

\* Free t-shirts for all participants

\* Free camping: May 1 and 2 at the Bandera City Park and at Pioneer River Resorts (across 173 from the park). Pioneer River Resorts is offering free camping and hot showers for all river cleanup campers. RV sites with full hookups are available to river cleanup participants at Pioneer for \$11 per vehicle, less than half their normal rate. For reservations call 1-866-371-3751 or (830) 796-3751 or email Linda or Lloyd Randall at [pioneererrr@sbcglobal.net](mailto:pioneererrr@sbcglobal.net).

Info about the clean up and the Medina River Protection Fund is available at: [www.MedinaRiver.net](http://www.MedinaRiver.net) or write

[rbrischetto@wireweb.net](mailto:rbrischetto@wireweb.net)

### Start a Cleanup on Your River

The Texas River Protection Association will help you organize a river cleanup on any river in Texas. The tools are available on our website and we will provide consulting at no charge:

<http://www.txrivers.org/cleanups/index.html>

## Texas Rivers Protection Association Membership Application

To join, or renew your membership, fill out the information below and include a check for your dues.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Hm Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Wk phone \_\_\_\_\_

Street \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Check here if e-mail version of newsletter is sufficient \_\_\_\_\_

### Levels of membership: (check one)

\$10\_\_\_ Regular \$25\_\_\_ Protector \$50\_\_\_ Guardian \$100\_\_\_ Ranger \$500\_\_\_ Bronze \$1000\_\_\_ Silver \$5000\_\_\_ Gold

Is this a renewal? \_\_\_\_\_ Check if new address \_\_\_\_\_

All members receive a bumper sticker, notices and newsletters and get to vote at general meetings. Protectors also receive a cloisonné pin with our emblem. Guardians receive the pin and either a logo cap or logo t-shirt or a Texas Whitewater DVD. Rangers and above receive all three. Guardians need to indicate their choice (cap, t-shirt or DVD) and Rangers and Guardians wanting t-shirts should indicate their size (M,L,XL, or XXL).

Protectors, Guardians, Rangers, Bronze, Silver and Gold members:

Please send the following:

Protector \$25 \_\_\_ Cloisonné Pin

Guardian \$50 \_\_\_ Cloisonné Pin and \_\_\_ Cap or \_\_\_ t-shirt (circle one) M L XL XXL or \_\_\_ DVD

Ranger \$100 & above \_\_\_ Cloisonné Pin and \_\_\_ Cap and \_\_\_ t-shirt (circle one) M L XL XXL and \_\_\_ DVD

We will not send any merchandise, unless the above section is filled out.

\_\_\_ I would like to receive a new bumper sticker.



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444 Pecan Park Drive  
San Marcos, TX 78666