

Friends of Garner 2019 SUMMARY

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In the western part
of Texas
90 miles from San
Antone
is a place I go each
summer
when I get the urge
to roam...



Welcome to the new Friends of Garner Newsletter!

Our first issue is this 2019 Summary of Events, which will be followed by a regular monthly newsletter which will include a summary of the past month's business, a schedule of park and Friends of Garner events for the following month, proposed Interpretive Ranger events, and other Garner news and photographs.

The Park is currently closed to the public but will re-open as soon as it's safe to congregate. Watch your email for updates!

Once we re-open we will post the Hayride schedule for the summer. Call the Visitor Center at **830-232-5999** to reserve and prepay your spot – they fill up quickly!

For other Friends of Garner Information see our new and improved website at <https://friendsofgarner.org/> Our Webmaster Mary Kinard has done a wonderful job!

You can even make a donation to Friends of Garner online at <https://friendsofgarner.org/donate-online>

With the Visitor Center and park closed, now would be a great time to make a donation or renew your membership! Membership is now due in January – are you current? Renewal information can be found here <https://friendsofgarner.org/membership>

Like us on Facebook at:

Friends of Garner State Park

Friends of Garner State Park Nature & Visitor Center



Along the River by Debbie Jackson

Hi there from Friends of Garner, a non-profit organization contributing to the resources, programs and sustainability of Texas' most popular state park. Your board of directors and volunteers worked tirelessly in 2019 to uphold our mission. This culminating newsletter of 2019 will be the beginning of informing you on what not only you can contribute to but praise your contribution to this 78 year old park that has been a place of peace, memories and relaxation to up to 5 generations. Hopefully this newsletter will not only be informative but an inspiration for you to visit and while here help us out with a few hours of maintenance, monetary donations, purchasing items in our Visitor Center and attending ranger led programs.

Examples of assistance include Nancy, Jim and Brad who trimmed the hayride trails, Linda, Pat, Sandi and John who joined our team to clean our section of highway or Ed and Dennis who installed lighting in the Visitor Center. There is also Robert from East Texas who repaired our hay wagon PA system and installed our new television monitor to serve information for our visitors. Brenda is our new Visitor Center Manager who spills out information on trails and birds as well as stocking the Visitor Center with new items. Look for her fine work as she produces this newsletter.

In January of 2019 and 2020, we had a total of 150 enthusiasts who cleaned trails, repaired items and enjoyed a theme of purpose and community. There are so many to thank and so many I left out. We will feature some of these contributions in future quarterly newsletters.

As of April 7, Garner State Park is closed due to the spread of COVID-19. The Friends of Garner understands that this decision is the best for the staff and local community. Joining all of you that support the park to continue to be diligent and abide by our leaders' regulations and suggestions. In the lyrics of another song by Ella Fitzgerald, "Blue skies, smiling at me, nothing but blue skies, do I see. Blue days, all of them gone, Nothing but blue skies from now on". This too will pass and we, again, will appreciate our state parks, our state, our nation and our world in a different light. 'Til we meet again around the campfire, hiking, fishing and floating down the river, take good care of yourselves.

Debbie Jackson, President Friends of Garner State Park



2019 TREASURER'S SUMMARY

2019 officially ended with \$187k, \$6k less than 2018. Our IRS form 990EZ is filed and is available on request. We have \$35k set aside for a Park Headquarters night gate; \$45k for a building fund; and \$95k for operational and unrestricted needs. The 2020 budget includes a \$13k deficit for staffing the visitor center. Copies of the IRS F990EZ, Year-end P&L, Balance sheet, and 2019 actuals to budgeted, and the 2020 FOG budget reports were emailed to the FOG board officers and state (David Allen). Other FOG financial reports can be obtained by any board member using QuickBooks On-line.

Terry Berkstresser

2019 FRIENDS OF GARNER DONATIONS TO THE PARK



Park Superintendent David Allen accepts the keys for the Park's new Kawasaki Mule from FOG President Debbie Jackson.

With your participation in our fundraisers, the Friends of Garner (aka FOG) was able to help the park with projects that maintain or enhance the natural resources, visitor's enjoyment, historical preservation and education all while preserving the environment. In 2019 we gave the park a Kawasaki Mule that can serve as a rescue vehicle on the narrow trails and bridges as well as maintenance jobs by our park hosts. The Board of Directors also honored Mr. Allen's request to purchase materials for an automatic security gate for the front entrance. Your donations and contributions helped Ranger Shaylee Burns with support for her interpretive programs from Star Gazing to art projects to trail maintenance. Volunteers donated their time to clean highways along FOG's 2 mile stretch as well as serving meals to our deer hunting volunteers.

An important big project for FOG is can recycling. In 2019, a new street legal trailer was purchased for transporting baled or loose cans to metal recycling centers. The Visitor Center received some updates including some painting and new lighting fixtures. Read more from our Visitor Center Manager, Brenda Seidenberg, for plans to make your visit not only enjoyable but also educational.

Nature & Visitor Center



2019 NATURE & VISITOR CENTER SUMMARY

2019 was a year of change for the Friends of Garner Nature & Visitor Center! We said goodbye to long-time manager Linda Kirkpatrick as she retired in March and welcomed new manager Brenda Seidenberg in April. Changes in the Visitor Center include:

- More definition between the Interpretive Display area and the Friends of Garner Non-Profit Gift Shop.
- Created an Interpretative area in the front room of the building with displays of fossils, rocks, and CCC materials.
- Renewed emphasis on merchandise and gifts that are nature oriented.
- Upgraded the facility with new paint, displays, and lighting.

The Friends of Garner Native and Wildflower Garden was the focus of a tremendous amount of work as FOG, with the help of Shaylee Burns Interpretive Ranger, volunteers from the Hill Country Chapter of Texas Naturalists, the Frio Canyon Garden Club in Leakey, Tx, dedicated park hosts, and individual volunteers who spent many hours working to restore and reseed the gardens behind the Visitor Center. Changes include:

- A heavy cleanup of the garden and grounds. Many hours were spent redefining the paths and gardens with native river rock. A butterfly house was added by an anonymous donor – thank you!
- A “seed stomp” was held in the fall to replant the area with new seed, including native plants used for medicinal purposes as well as plants to attract hummingbirds, butterflies, and other pollinators.



Joy & Darrell Kunkel, Park Hosts

MY GARNER STORY



Jukebox Songs

by Terry Berkstresser

What's your favorite song on the Garner jukebox? You most likely remember a few of them. In these times of social distancing, we just can't wait to hear those box speakers on the roof at the pavilion, and have that summer fun at Garner. Maybe it was while rubbing your fingers raw building rock dams to swim an ever shallowing Frio River. Lyrics like, "I can't get no - satisfaction" by the Rolling Stones while eating a sandwich at your campsite in the Oakmont grove. We played cards while sitting on the wall while "On the Dock of the Bay" by Otis Redding played. Many of you can recall humming to Frankie Miller's "Blackland Farmer" while playing putt-putt golf, or listening to "Fraulein" by Bobby Helms while eating a burrito and ice tea at the cafe. Hearing "Joy To World" by Three Dog Night as you came over the hill in the car let you know you had arrived at Garner.

What was your first waltz danced at Garner? "Waltz Across Texas" by Ernest Tubb, "Four in the Morning" by Faron Young, "Rainbow At Midnight" by Darrel McCall, "Bandera Waltz" by Adolph Hofner, or "Cattle Call" by Eddie Arnold? And was it with that girl standing near the tree. She had to say yes at least once to each boy that asked her to dance. It was Garner etiquette. Don't screw up the dance or pick the wrong song, you maybe only had one chance. As you danced, was your cousin was sitting on the wall counting with the beat, 1, 2, 3, with their fingers pointed high in the air to help you keep in step with the music.

There were those everybody getup and dance songs. Recall those songs that you line danced to? "Rocking Robin" by Michael Jackson? Did you dance the "Bunny Hop"? Certainly you danced to the "Cottoneyed Joe", "Jalisco", and "The Schottische" by Al Dean and The All Stars. Each song had their own dance steps and you learned on-the-spot or during the daytime when the dancefloor wasn't so crowded.

Did you do the western whip with its west coast swing or the Garner whip with its push-steps? "Susie Q" by Denny Ezba, "1-2-3" by Len Barry, "Kiss and Run" (Some called it "biscuits and rum".) by Gary and Sunny, and "It Takes Two" by Marvin Gaye and Kim Weston, were all great whip songs. How many new spins did you create while on the slick spot we called the "whipping block"? That piece of concrete needs some polishing or replacing these days. I doubt another piece of concrete as smooth could be made for doing the Garner whip.

River flip-flops were not for dancing. Many Garner regulars bought smooth tan leather moccasins in the Garner gift shop, or from Slade's Saddle Shop in Uvalde. Your partner could spin like a top and you could keep your feet clear of other feet. We called them our "whippin' shoes".

There were other visitors wearing boots and hats that had their own dance styles on the dancefloor. Some danced a choppy fast-fast-slow-slow two-step, arms a flinging. Others "smooth as floating the Frio", my younger sister once commented after dancing to Buck Owen's "Sam's Place", and to George Jones' "The Race Is On".

Once in the mid-sixties there was a battle between the Beatles and Ray Price; both simultaneously had 22 singles on the jukebox. Can you name a few of those songs? Charlie Pride singing "Crystal Chandeliers" made us think of the CCC crafting the pavilion light fixtures. Johnny Bush emotionally singing "You Gave Me a Mountain" inspired a few hikes up Old Baldy the next day. Years later you heard more than a few George Strait songs. One song would have you shouting

at the top of your lungs, "Blame it on Mexico". There was "Going to the River" by Frankie Anthony. On those hot summer days when it played, your friends would literally "throw you in the river". The water beneath the pavilion was pretty deep in those days. After being thrown in five times, that last

time they threw the girl you liked with the red polka-dot dress from Weslaco in the river with you as well. Did you ever wail out the ending to B.J. Thomas's "I'm So Lonesome I Could Cry" at the end of the week when your "old" Garner friends had to go home and left you to find new Garner friends?

The Friends of Garner exists to support programs in preservation and management of environmental, historical, and cultural resources for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations. One of our heroes is Brett Rimkus, concessionaire extraordinaire. He's the Garner State Park dam report guy on Facebook. He carries the baton keeping our Garner jukebox running and the lights on until 11pm each and every day each summer. Keep the jukebox volume turned up, Brett. You know Garner State Park isn't like any other park in Texas. If campers expect summer silence after sunset, they need to think about camping somewhere else.

Garner jukebox songs have come and gone. Brett keeps a good jukebox. The traditional songs will hopefully remain the same. Joined with new songs, the jukebox will provide many memories of Garner State Park. Whether it's vinyl, tape, plastic, or a solid state, everyone still listen for those special Garner sounds. Maybe it's a tap of the shoe box in the Champagne Brothers' "Chickawawa", a beer can opening in Jim Ed Brown's "Pop-A-Top", or the scratchiness in the song, "Driftwood" by Buzz Clifford. Next time you are at the park, vote for your favorite jukebox recording. At last visit, a half dollar donation was required for each song. Take a few one dollar bills or a bundle of quarters and see what memories you conjure, then pass the memories along to your kids.

THE LAST WORD



REMEMBERING DIANE FOSHEE November 26, 1935 – October 9, 2019

It is with great sadness that we announce that Diane Foshee passed away on October 9, 2019. A memorial service was held October 19, 2019, at Leakey United Methodist Church, in Leakey, Texas, where Diane was an active member for many years.

Diane and her husband George were generous and compassionate supporters of and contributors to Garner State Park. She was one of the founders of FRIENDS OF GARNER and a significant developer of Garner's trail system. Her tales of coming to the park as a child in the 40s and her narration of the history will be missed but have been saved for future generations. Please join us in thoughts and prayers for her loving family.

Current Board Members:

President:	Debbie Jackson
Vice President:	Scott Davis
Secretary:	MaryAnn Laughlin Abbot
Treasurer:	Terry Berkstresser
Members-at-Large:	Ed Mack, Johnnie Jackson, Charmaine Davis, Robert Adams, Dirk Foshee, Debbie Armentor

Park Superintendent: David Allen, Garner State Park

Newsletter Contact: Brenda Seidenberg, Visitor Center Manager
FOGConcan1.TX@gmail.com

I'll be back
again next
year...
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again next
year...
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again next
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