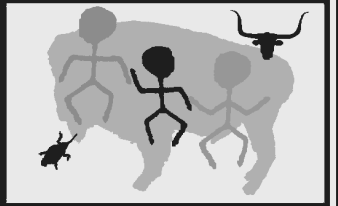


# Friends of San Angelo State Park



VOL. 18

FALL, 2020

NO. 2

## 2020 SPRING AND SUMMER CHALLENGES AT SAN ANGELO STATE PARK.

By Jarrett Miller Assistant Superintendent

We started the year great and were gearing up for our mowing season **when Covid-19 hit.**

We mustered through a couple weeks. **Then the Governor, out of an abundance of caution, shut down all the state parks.** The two--week closure set us back a bit because no one could come in to work **except to feed the Longhorn and Bison.**

We bounced back from the closures, not without new challenges. All **reservations had to be made online. No cash or card transactions were allowed at the gatehouse. Social distancing rules were in effect. Face masks. Limits on number of people in groups.**

About the time we were getting a handle on those restrictions, **a big hailstorm hit the park in May.**

- **Nine park vehicles sustained damage.**
- **The drink machine at the gatehouse was blown over.**
- **Part of the pavilion roof was blown off.**
- **Isabel Harte restroom roof was missing shingles.**
- **The Wildlife viewing blind took a tumble.**

Park staff and volunteers rose to the occasion and began the cleanup process. Clearing the biggest part of the tree debris was first on the list. Facility repairs were coordinated through the TPWD state and regional offices.

Then we went to work cleaning up the Wildlife Viewing area debris. The volunteers who feed the wildlife daily could resume that activity.

All in all, everything went smoothly and there are very little reminders of the storm damage apart from dead tree limbs on the trail system.

Next hurdle came when the **park was shut down again for two-weeks due to an employee presumed positive for Covid-19. Staff was only able to come in to feed the Longhorn and Bison.**

Now here we are, gearing up for fall activities and visitors, getting ready for hunting season and hoping for the best.

San Angelo State Park staff with the help of the FoSASP and all the great volunteers will be able to adapt and overcome whatever new challenges attempt to keep us down in the near future.



*The world is full of willing people;  
some are willing to work,  
the rest willing to let them.*

*~ Robert Frost*



## Friends of San Angelo State Park

### *Board of Advisors* 2019-2020

The Board of Directors is elected by the members to a three-year term.

Directors meet every two months to plan and coordinate activities and provide oversight of funds.

Linda Ashton	Sandy Pedersen
Sarah Howell	Amanda Razani
Ruth Jordan	Brownie Roberts
Gail Metcalfe	Marilyn Russell
Larry McMurtrey	Laurel Scott
Cindy Middleton	John Talley
Deola Mitts	Terry Wallace
Steve Nelson	Deborah Watson

The Newsletter is a quarterly publication produced by Friends of San Angelo State park, a non-profit corporation organized for the purpose of

- ensuring the future of the park by preserving it for future generations
- enhancing the quality of educational, interpretive and recreational opportunities in the park
- recruiting volunteers
- promoting regional support
- soliciting finances and resources for the perpetration of the park and
- soliciting and receiving gifts for endowments for the benefit of the park.

*Ruth Jordan - Editor*

**Friends of SASP**  
**3900-2 Mercedes**  
**San Angelo, TX, 76901**  
**ruthjordan@suddenlink.net**



*Published by Qs Printing and Design*

# FRIENDS ARE THE HEART OF THIS PARK.

-Jim Cisneros to Friends of SASP

To the Friends of SASP:

It is with mixed emotions that I write this. I recently applied, interviewed and was offered the position of superintendent at Brazos Bend State Park. I have accepted the position and will be moving to Houston.

As I prepare to move on to another park within our great park system, I am thankful to have experienced the generosity and hospitality that has been offered by the Friends of San Angelo State Park.

As I look at all the work our staff and the Friends of San Angelo State Park have accomplished over the last three years, I am so proud to have been a small part of this work. From improved trails, maps and signage to new visitor orientation panels to a new ADA section added to our bird blind.

We have experienced adverse weather, great celebrations, new programming, increased social media presence and countless other accomplishments that have put this park back in the limelight.

Thank you for allowing me to participate on the board. I have learned much from each of you. Your passion will ensure that San Angelo State Park gets the recognition it deserves.

I have no doubt that you will break in the new superintendent and teach him the ropes as you have me. The work you had started before me will continue after I am gone. You have been a great group to work with and I will forever cherish the memories I take with me.

In my life the one thing that has been consistent in my career is change. I encourage you to all embrace the change and the challenge it brings. Lean on each other and keep the momentum you have created going.

Thank you and I hope that one day my career will come back this way. This park and the people of San Angelo have a lot to offer our community and Texas.

**You are the heart of this park and your great work will ensure it stays elevated within our state park system.**

Friends members and rangers gathered on a rainy day at Chaparral Pavilion to say Farewell to Jim Cisneros.

A Bison named Angelo among other mementos and gifts were presented to departing Park Superintendent.

They are: (sitting) Ruth Jordan, Sandy Pedersen, Deola Mitts, Standing - Linda Ashton, Mike Sharpsteen, Laurel Scott, Jerry Middleton, Cindy Middleton, John Talley, Gail Metcalfe, Jarrett Miller, Jim, and Amanda Razani. JT Bailey also attended and took the photo.





# SPOTLIGHT ON A RANGER

Bonnie Wallace  
San Angelo State Park's First Interpretive Ranger  
By Laurel L. Scott



The ongoing pandemic restrictions of 2020 have brought most activities to a halt at San Angelo State Park, but not the vision for its future. With an eye on boosting interactions with the public, Ranger Bonnie Wallace has been named the park's first full-time Interpretive Ranger.

The Interpretive Ranger position is a new role for Bonnie, but not an addition to the park's staff. Superintendent Jim Cisneros said the park was able to offer the Interpreter position after the retirement of the TPWD herd manager. The bison and longhorn herds are now being managed by a ranger from Fort Griffin State Historic Site.

A native of Lampasas, Bonnie grew up around the ranching life. "I did stock shows a lot as a kid, and one of the shows we would come to a lot was San Angelo," she said. "My grandfather raised Angora and Boer goats."

Bonnie arrived in San Angelo full time in 2008 as a student at Angelo State University. She graduated cum laude with a Bachelor of Science in Animal science and Animal Business with split minors in Range and Wildlife. Then she

earned a master's degree in Animal Science with a 4.0 GPA. She joined San Angelo State Park as a Customer Service Representative (CSR) in 2016.

"I was studying meat and food science, then changed direction toward animal science," she said. "I did a variety of other - mostly office- jobs but wanted to get outdoors and do hands-on work." She said. "That's when I got the CSR position at the park."

Becoming full-time Maintenance Specialist in 2018, her responsibilities included campground maintenance, safety and conducting interpretive tours for the park.

"They usually had a maintenance ranger do some interpretive programs, and that's what I did," Bonnie said. "Jim Cisneros, park Superintendent, encouraged me to do the additional training, so when the Interpreter Ranger job. So when came open I was prepared with certifications, classes and program development experience."

As a certified interpretive guide, Bonnie is prepared to offer the public, once COVID-19 restrictions are eased, a wide variety of programs for children and adults. Those include archery, a Skins/Skulls Trunk, Night Sky

talks for full and new moons, identifying animal tracks, wildflower walks, hikes for dog owners, and Junior Ranger hikes. She also introduced an annual Galentine's Day hike, an idea from the "Parks and Recreation" TV show to bring girlfriends together for an annual hike.

She will play a leading role in community outreach, managing social media, taking on speaking engagements and making TV and radio appearances to promote the park and its activities. She has hosted programs for community organizations, including home school groups, the Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts, Goodfellow Air Force Base, Angelo State University, and staff of Blue Bell Ice Cream. She has hosted visits from students and teachers from San Angelo ISD, Wall ISD, Del Rio ISD and Grape Creek ISD.

In the future, she plans to develop educational trips to the park's Macy's Grave and to discuss the history of the Concho Pearl, found only in the Concho River.

**"That's part of the job I love," Wallace said. "You get to develop new ideas, new programs."**



# VIEW BETWEEN THE EARS!

by Cindy Middleton

Found a water hole



Little  
Foot  
Draw

## Water in West Texas is a precious thing.

Riding in hot summer can take a toll on riders and mounts quite quickly. When riding in SASP, it is very necessary to know where to find the water sources. My friends and I, all members of FoSASP (Some on the Board of Directors.) have been riding there for years and have a pretty good idea where the natural watering spots and park's water troughs can be found.

A favorite natural water hole, when we do get some good rain, is at Little Foot Draw on Dinosaur Trail. It's an excellent spot to train and practice horses to cross water and a great site for photo ops! If the pool is dry it is just a little way to a water trough and a faucet near the Permian tracks site.

Another favorite water hole is over on Area 6/7 at Brown's Crossing. Sometimes dry, but when we have good rains, this place is overflowing with water. It is an awesome sight to see it flow over the slabs of sandstone which made a natural crossing spot for the Butterfield Stage back in the day. Some cattle pens nearby have a trough, but sadly, sometimes it is bone dry. Ponies can be greatly disappointed.

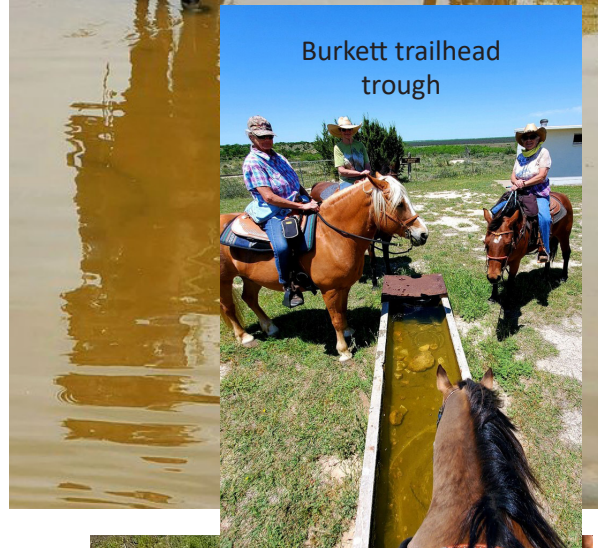
Other areas where riders can find troughs are at the Burkett Trailhead, River Bend campground, Bell's Point area, Five Points where five trails converge, and the North Concho pavilion. There is also a trough where the Rocky Creek Trail converges with the Big Hill trails along a dirt road. If you make it out to the cattle pens, which is along the Trailhead-to-Trailhead route and down the road a ways east of Five-Points, you can find two water troughs and usually the Longhorn herd.

For those riding the south side, water is scarcer. The restroom at Isabel Harte campground has a couple faucets. There are multiple water faucets at the Chaparral Pavilion. Just be sure to carry a portable water bucket for your horse to drink from. And it might be a good idea to get your horse used to drinking from it, too.

**Don't let hot weather or dry conditions scare you away from the best equestrian trails in Texas.**



Little  
Foot  
Draw



Burkett trailhead  
trough



No Water!  
Disappointed  
Ponies



# OVER THE BARS

By Steve Nelson.



One thing that I really enjoy is bike riding. Specifically, mountain bike riding at San Angelo SP where there are so many miles of trails and different places to start a ride.

I never get bored.

Located near the middle of Texas, it boasts rugged terrain dotted with small mesas.

On the northwest side of San Angelo along FM 2288, it's close enough to town that some locals ride their bikes to the park and jump on the trail near the park gate. Another popular place to start a ride is the playground parking lot.

Choose from aptly named trails like Horned Toad or Chaparral that join into Tasajila or Winding Snake trails. From Burkett Trail there are four trails to choose from.

Riders looking for a challenge can try Rollercoaster. Playground trails are for experts and not the faint of heart.

Map kiosks and new markers help keep you on course. Bike repair stations are provided courtesy of the Friends of San Angelo SP

Take a moment to enjoy Bell's Point scenic spot.

The Five Points rest stop has shade and drinking water.

Plan to visit the park several times as one day is not enough to see everything. Be sure that your bike is in good shape and you have plenty of water.

*Enjoy.*

## Raccoons Defeated by New Bird Seed Storage Box

"The critters have chewed holes in the heavy plastic locked deck box, unscrewed the can lids. They have and stolen and scattered the feed. Every day. They even pick out the choice sunflower seed." said Laurel Scott who manages the bird feeding.

A new set up was required.

After much shopping by Laurel, a metal box was located at Tractor Supply for about \$300, purchased at a discount, delivered by Ruth and John Jordan, assembled by Jim Cisneros and Jarrett Miller.

Locked.

During the first days of the new box, it rained. Laurel reported that muddy paw prints appeared all over the box. But the seed was not disturbed.. Thieves thwarted. Bird feeders back in business.

*Thank You for the discount*

**Tractor Supply**





## NEW OFFICE MANAGER

Cheree Watts, selected as new Office Manager has over twenty years of Administrative Assistance experience.

She worked at Big Spring State Hospital for over seven years before transferring to San Angelo State Supported Living Center where she worked until 2018.

Cheree specializes in administrative duties including Human Resources, payroll, and time-keeping, and enjoys working in customer service.

Cheree is married to Kenneth, She has 3 daughters and 1 stepdaughter as well as 3 grandchildren including a set of twins.

In her free time, Cheree loves to do anything with her girls and grandkids but also LOVES to bass fish at all of the area lakes with her husband and their Boxer/Pointer mix dog, Scout. However, her heart is on Lake Amistad in Del Rio where she caught her personal best (10.2 lbs) on Mother's Day 2018.

"Cheree has an extremely positive attitude with a tireless work ethic and encourage others to work hard and be successful.

She is excited to become a part of our team and looks forward to her future with SASP." said Jarrett Miller, Acting Superintendent.

### FRIENDS OF SAN ANGELO STATE PARK Membership Application

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Regular Member (\$25)

\_\_\_\_\_ Senior Member (\$20)

\_\_\_\_\_ Organization (\$35)

\_\_\_\_\_ Business Bronze (\$50)

\_\_\_\_\_ Business Silver (\$100)

\_\_\_\_\_ Family (\$40)

\_\_\_\_\_ Senior Family (\$30)

\_\_\_\_\_ Student & Military (\$15)

Additional Donation

\$ \_\_\_\_\_

Mail to:

**Friends of SASP,  
3900-2 Mercedes,  
San Angelo, TX  
76901**



Melanie Lacy received retirement gifts delivered by Friends Ruth Jordan and Sandy Pedersen on the lawn. Covid-19 restrictions prevented a gathering honoring her many years of service at SASP.

## Farewells and Welcomes Staff Retirements, Departures, Hirings

**Jim Cisneros**, Superintendent, transferred to Brazos Bend SP.

**Melanie Lacy**, retired after many years as Office Manager and general "Go- to Girl".

She and her husband are RV touring the western states.

**Cheree Watts** is Melanie's replacement

**Lorianne Pink**, Customer Service Representative, at the South Shore gatehouse worker, resigned to relocate to Wyoming.

**Donnia Robles**, formerly a Park Host, returns as CSR, will be in the Gatehouse.

**LaFonda Birdcreek** is a new CSR to replace **Kip Moore** who resigned to take a job more in line with his education

**Bruce Grooshans** retired Sept. 30

# Friends of San Angelo State Park

Annual Report – Fiscal Year 2019-2020

Park closures and restrictions due to Covid-19 curtailed activities for more than half the fiscal year.

<b>Membership</b>	Membership fees income		\$675
	Membership meeting/ fish fry held Sept, 2019,	\$-231	
<b>Public Awareness</b>			
	Newsletter and website	\$-284	
	Ranger Claus PR Event	\$-200	
	Membership in San Angelo Chamber of Commerce	\$-275	
<b>Projects</b>	Added pens in equestrian campground	\$ -1,961	
<b>Provide volunteer service to park.</b>			
	Volunteers reported over 1,900 hours of service, including trail work, tour leaders, staff support, vending machine, gift shop, bird feeding, administration, and more.		
	Monetary value – more than \$20,000		
	Volunteer recognitions awards	\$ -341	
	Volunteer assistance with clean up after spring storm damage.		
<b>Events</b>	Provide insurance coverage for events.	\$ - 672	
	Assisted and provided funds for staff-initiated park event		
	Holly-Days in the Park	\$-1,600	
	Monarch Trail Ride Fundraiser		\$3,153
<b>Purchases for the Park</b>			
	Purchase items for park as requested by staff and volunteers including: tractor repair parts, signage, insecticide and staff support.	\$-1,857	
<b>Financial</b>	Approved and maintained balanced budget of \$18,000		
	Solicited funds through grants and donations, San Angelo Gives, and sponsorships.		\$6,305
	Maintain outdoor vending station for sale of firewood.		
	Maintain gift shop and drink machines.		\$2,980
<b>Cash Summary</b>			
	Income	\$15,337	
	Expenses	\$10,808	
<b>Cash on hand at year end</b>		\$43,125	

San Angelo Gives Donations to FoSASP received in

## Memorial and in Honor of

Steven Alred  
Diana R Banks  
Labecca Buselli  
Terry Busker  
Charles Camp  
Paul Dicello  
Jonathan Jennings  
Ruth Jordan  
Tommy Lafon  
Jorge Mata  
Courtney Nagel  
J Kyle Olson  
Aquilas Ortega  
Richad Osteen  
Martin Pedersen  
Amanda Razani  
Shirley A Reid  
Laurel Scott  
Joe D. Weaver  
Christy Vanoss  
Paula Walker  
Joan Ward  
Sherry Wehner  
All Volunteers

Donations totaled of \$2,900

Thank You, San Angelo.

## NOT FORGOTTEN

### Jack Matthews

1933-2020

Longtime Friend of SASP, Jack Matthews passed away July 27. He is survived by Frances, his wife of sixty-eight years. Jack will be remembered as an active volunteer, fifteen years of membership in FoSASP, and helping with trail clearing. His donations of beautiful wood carvings for the trail ride annual auctions are treasured by many lucky high-bidders. Jack and Frances were faithful attendees of the annual membership meeting/pot luck dinner. They were usually present for the trail ride dinner in the park and the Cowboy Church service where Frances often presented everyone with her tiny crocheted crosses.

Memorial Donations have been received in his honor.

Thank you, Jack, for your Friendship.





## FRIENDS OF SAN ANGELO STATE PARK

3900-2 MERCEDES

SAN ANGELO, TEXAS 76901

# INTERPRETATIVE ACTIVITIES

By Bonnie Wallace  
Interpretative Ranger

San Angelo State Park is not currently conducting interpretive programs or park tours. Limits on group sizes and other safety practices prevent delivery of an enjoyable and educational program that we are accustomed to leading for the public.

At present, the staff is focused on social media efforts on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter. We are concentrating on releasing more posts on a weekly basis, more engagement with the public on the accounts, and producing more educational videos and written articles.

The biggest help to the rangers for keeping up with the social media posts are the volunteers that come out to the park, take pictures of the wildlife, scenery, weather, and share them with the park rangers who then are able to use them on social media so the community can see what is happening at the park.

This is a great way for our Friends members to get a mention on social media pages. Anyone with a photo to share should send it to Ranger Bonnie @ [bonnie.wallace@tpwd.texas.gov](mailto:bonnie.wallace@tpwd.texas.gov).

The rangers are feeding the Bison and Longhorns up near the fence line every Saturday at 11:00 so the public can view them while still maintaining social distancing guidelines.

### Editor's Note:

Bonnie Wallace recently completed training and was assigned the position of Interpretative Ranger.

In TPWD-speak, that means her main job is to "interpret" the parks features and assets for visitors. (Nothing associated with speaking or translating a foreign language is implied.) Thus, interpretation is accomplished through tours, programs, hikes and public relations announcements and social media posts.

## HUNTING IN THE PARK

White-tailed Deer - Archery only  
Oct. 3-31, Nov. 16-21

Feral Hogs - Archery  
Oct. 3-31 and Nov. 16-21

Feral Hogs- Shotgun  
Dec. 12- Feb. 21

Javelina  
Oct. 3-31 and Nov. 16-21

Turkey -Archery only  
Oct. 3-31 and Nov. 16-21

Quail  
Dec. 12-Feb.21

Waterfowl, Squirrels, Rabbits  
Please call for specifics 325-949-4745

## REOPENING FISH POND AT JAVILINA DRAW

The pond has water and has been stocked with fish.

Free fishing for as long as the water lasts.

Information: 325-949-4757 or  
San Angelo State Park  
Facebook page