



From RoxAnn Donahoo,
Club President



Hello Outdoor Women!

It has been so much fun being your president for the past two years and I really appreciate all those who supported and encouraged me throughout my term as your leader. We have such a great time in TOWN-Austin! Special thanks to the club officers that help with keeping things running smoothly in the club. And thank you to all the members that participate and especially those who volunteer to lead outings during the year. Since our club is all volunteer driven, it really does take all of us to make it work. I am passing the torch on to another but I will remain in the club and excited about leading some great outings in the new year.

In reflecting on 2005, we had fun doing a wide variety of outings: race walking, bike riding, disc golf, regular golf lessons, fly fishing, windsurfing, archery, stargazing, bird watching, tubing on the San Marcos River, and Canopy Tours at the edge of Austin. We went hiking at McKinney Falls State Park, Barton Creek and Turkey Creek Trail at City Park. We went kayaking at Matagorda Bay, Lighthouse Lakes, Nueces River near Uvalde, San Marcos River and on Town Lake on 4th of July to watch bats and fireworks. We did campouts at Palmetto State Park, Nueces River-Cadillac Ranch, Garner State Park, South Llano River State Park, Inks Lake State Park, Balmorhea State Park, and the Pedernales State Park. We also went backpacking at Lost Maples State Park. *(cont. on page 2)*

Monthly Meeting Schedule 2006

Guest Speakers List:

January 24th – Bicycling – Joy Emshoff will talk about how to change a tire and basic bicycle info.

Jacque Austin might share info on biking tours, if time permits.

February 28th – Austin Parks Foundation –

Charlie McCabe to discuss Adopt a Park program, It's My Park Day in April 2006, and the Shoal Creek Greenbelt Revitalization effort.

Presentation with slides, time for Q & A. www.austinparks.org

“Our mission is to provide all women the opportunity to learn and experience outdoor activities in natural surroundings through a safe, non-threatening, and supportive environment.”

TOWN LEADERSHIP TEAM

Club President/Publicity Chair -
RoxAnn Donahoo

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Membership Chair – Sandy Thompson
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**Austin TOWN P.O. Box 300494 Austin, TX
78703**

Monthly meeting - NOV 15th - LAST MEETING OF THE YEAR – (MOVED UP A WEEK DUE TO THE HOLIDAYS)

Please join us for officer elections.

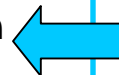
Nominations can be made at the meeting upon arrival. We will be electing a new club president, club webmaster, publicity chair, and club historian.

After the election, we will have a community potluck and party. Please bring your favorite potluck item to share. Austin TOWN will provide paper plates, napkins, cups and plastic ware. This is a fun time to visit about the cool events that we did this year and all the new things that we want to do next year.

Please join us !!!

NO MEETING IN DECEMBER

**New meeting location
starting in January –
stay tuned to the website!**





(Letter from RoxAnn, Club President, cont. from page 1)

We try to do at least one community service outings per year to give back to the community and Mother Nature. For 2005, we did the REI Service Project where we helped build more than a mile of trail and the first national trail in Texas at the Balcones Canyonland in the Doe Skin Ranch.

Part of having a big group that stays with us year after year is developing traditions that we enjoy doing every year as a group. Some of the great traditions we have developed so far in TOWN-Austin are weekly kayaking on Town Lake throughout the entire year, the annual holiday party at McKinney Falls in early January, the TOWN booth at the Becoming an Outdoors-Woman Workshop in March with the accompanying campout and activities at Inks Lake State Park, the annual Swap meet at the October monthly meeting, and the annual kayak and hike at the Trail of Lights in December.

We enjoyed great guest speakers at our monthly meetings this year as well. We are so grateful to the following speakers for sharing their time and information with us:

January: Stacy Trimble – Sportsman's Finest Store - Fly fishing

February: Lynda DeGroot - Central Texas Trail Tamers - all about their club and trail building

March: Planning Session to get more activities on the calendar

April: Sheila Hargis - Travis Audubon Society - bird watching

May: Rene Barrera - Austin Parks & Recreation Dpt. - talk and book on Austin Parks

June: Different kinds of camping: Joy Emshoff - Kayak camping, Sue Arcy - Backpacking,
RoxAnn Donahoo - car camping, Amelia Greene - RVing

July: Avery Houser - Girls Scouts of America - trail signs and activities we can do with them

August: Tim Florer - Caving in Texas

September: Tim Cole - Poisonous Snakes of Texas

October: David Cross - Wilderness First Aid

(RoxAnn's thoughts for 2006 on page 4)

Trip Report

Cypress Valley Canopy Tour submitted by member Marcia Cross

5 members of the Waco TOWN club and Austin TOWN members did the Cypress Valley Canopy Tour. The owners welcomed us and made everyone comfortable. Behind us was a fence line for the pasture where their buffalo roam. They had built a waterwheel and small 'convening' shelter atop a dam near the headwaters of a creek that starts and stops on their property as it empties into Lake Travis.

The first challenge was walking across the narrow dam to a training area. We had already donned helmets, thick gloves, and harness. We each took a turn zipping on a cable and also over handing ourselves back up to the start point. This was necessary to learn in case someone did not manage to zip all of the way up onto a platform. For the practice, we were only a few feet off of the ground, but it satisfied everyone that it wasn't that scary and that if you needed to rescue yourself up onto the platform, that that was neither scary, nor strenuous.

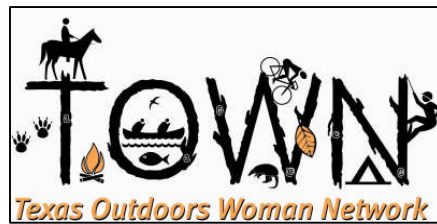
One of the things that worked out better than I expected was the pacing of a large group. We went as a continuous flow with the 'caboose' guide for the first group serving also as the 'engine' for the next group, which had its own 'caboose' guide. Sometimes a whole group would be gathered on a platform and able to watch and /or hear as the next group was approaching through the tree tops. If there were any squeals of fright, they were lost amongst the squeals of delight!

The gear was very comfortable and there was water available. The weather was wonderful, as was the wind up there. But best was the view from an angle you may never see again. There were lovely features in the trees, the walls of the 'canyon', the river, and the springs that feed the river. The longest of the zip lines was the most spectacular for two reasons: you could not see the platform at the end and the canyon below was at its most exciting.

The trip really did function as an eco-adventure too because our guides were telling us tidbits about the flora and fauna, including pointing what we could and could not eat. They talked about the local creatures, which they have become accustomed to the humans.



Trip Reports



Becoming An Outdoors Woman, October 28-30, submitted by Sandy Thompson, Club Membership Chair and new fisher woman!

This was my first BOW weekend and I have to tell you it was loads of fun. I can hardly wait until the next one. The workshop was held in Brenham, Texas at a camp called Camp For All. This camp is for children with special needs and chronic illnesses. The facilities and the grounds were beautiful and well kept. It was a very pleasant get away place.

Ashley and her volunteers from the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department had everything perfectly scheduled and organized. This was my first time to meet Ashley and I must say she was fantastic. She has a wonderful attitude and loves what she does. She made the weekend very relaxed and fun.

There were 100 women who came for the weekend. There were women from Houston, Dallas, San Antonio, Austin, and even a few from Louisiana. There were 6 Austin TOWN members in attendance. And there were 25 other women there from Austin and surrounding areas that also attended. We hope that these women who are not members would like to continue in the adventure of the outdoors and come and join our Austin TOWN group very soon.

The BOW offered workshops in kayaking, mountain biking, fly fishing, firearms, GPS, geology, archery, horseback riding, outdoor cooking, hiking, camping and even woodworking and basketry to name a few. The workshops were very basic and geared for women who had never done these activities before. The workshops began with a time of instruction and then after the instruction time we went out and practiced what we had learned. We were able to take 4 workshops over the course of the weekend. The instructors were very knowledgeable and patient with those of us who had never tried some of these activities before.

There were special programs offered in the evenings. One night someone spoke about bats and the next night someone talked about Hill Country Rivers and fishing. There was also a star party offered each night. On our last night, there were several campfires available to go to where we could make s'mores and laugh about the fun things that we experienced over the course of the weekend.

The only improvement I feel they could have made was in the food that was served to us. The meals were not really geared for women. They were heavy and meaty.

It was a great weekend and I am excited about the new skills that I have learned and new friendships that I made. If you were not able to go to this BOW weekend I hope that you will mark your calendars now for the one in March at Marble Falls.

Trail building at Balcones Canyonlands, submitted by RoxAnn Donahoo, Club President and new trail builder

We had a great time on October 29th when we headed out to Balcones Canyonlands - Doe Skin Ranch in between Lago Vista and Marble Falls. It was wayyy out in the country and absolutely gorgeous when you get that far away from the big city and see such a natural area. It was close to Cow Creek for any of you Lake Travis enthusiasts that knows where that is (diagonally across from Pace Bend park - WAY back in the woods).

Shana, Sandy, Laura and Bob, Helen and Jill, Debbie, RoxAnn and Judy all went to represent TOWN and show our appreciation to REI by supporting their annual service project to the community. TOWN Austin tries to do at least one service project each year as a way to give back to the community and contribute to nature.

Lots of other volunteers showed up from Central TX Trail Tamers and the REI store and we knocked out development of more than a mile of trail. The first National Trail in Texas! We learned how to use some new tools specifically for trail building. We leveled the ground, cut down branches and drug them off, we shoveled and swept dirt, and moved rocks. It felt SO good to know we were making a difference.

The weather was great. There were several sponsors for the event and so we ate very well for breakfast and especially for lunch, even had Amy's ice cream for dessert! So all those calories we worked off were put right back on before we left! haha!

For any of you that have not tried trail building, I would definitely encourage you to get out there and see what it is like. The volunteers were all so happy and productive. Where there was nothing, you get to see the trail come to life right before your eyes. Can't wait to go out there again and hike it!

REI really appreciated our help. Way to go TOWN -Austin!!

Check our website
for updated info
www.townaustin.org



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Nov 2005
Austin TOWN

(Club President, RoxAnn, looks toward 2006, cont. from page 2)

This next year, I am looking forward to leading some great outings for TOWN-Austin.

Some of the things I am working on are as follows:

Intro to Scuba with follow up trip to Honduras,

Intro to fishing at Buescher State Park with follow up fishing trip/campout/fish fry at Lake Belton,

Picnic, swimming and hiking at Blue Hole over at Wimberly, followed that evening by an outdoor movie at their local Corral Theatre,

Letterboxing/hiking at the 360 Overlook, hiking at Bright Leaf State Natural Area.

Biking and rollerblading on the Veloway,

Camping/Hiking at the Balcones Canyonland

Intro to Windsurfing and follow-up practice classes all summer

Campout and kayak trip to the Cadillac Ranch down at Uvalde

Caving at one primitive and one commercial cave

Intro to Archery event and a level two class

So there are a lot of good things to look forward to!!!

Smiles, RoxAnn

We will be selling
new TOWN t-shirts
in the Spring!!
We are coming up with
an Austin logo for our
chapter!



TOWN Membership Renewal

We are coming to the close of another year
and it is almost time to renew
your TOWN membership.

We hope that you have attended
some fun outdoor activities and
made some new friends this year.

Every year we ask that you renew
your membership with TOWN. The cost is
\$20/per person for the whole year.

February 1st is the deadline for renewal.

You can pick up a membership application
at one of our meetings
or download one from our website.

Sandy Thompson, Club Membership Chair

All participants in the TOWN e-group have until
**February 1, 2006 to join the Austin TOWN Club
or they will be removed from the e-group.**

All memberships renew February 1st of each year for
only \$20/person. We keep the cost to a bare
minimum to make it super easy for everyone and
to generate just enough money to run the operations
of the club and pay the bills. We will start accepting
applications on January 1st. For the remainder of
this year, if you want to join the club, it is only
\$10/person and that would carry you up
to February 1st. Anyone who does not renew in
January will be dropped from the e-group
on February 1st. Being able to hear about planned
and impromptu outings as they are announced,
special sales of outdoor equipment from
members and other breaking news in the club is a
big advantage and will only be a perk of membership
in the future. The information for planned outings
will still be regularly posted to our calendar on the
website for everyone else outside the e-group. A big
advantage to hearing about things as they are
announced is getting in on certain limited number
activities first or getting that great sale price on a
slightly used kayak before anyone else!

October 25 meeting featured

Dr. David Cross - Wilderness First Aid –

Dr. Cross was very thorough in his presentation of
how to deal with common injuries and illnesses. He
provided a slide show, as well as a very detailed
and informative handout.

(David is the husband of one of our Austin TOWN
members, Marcia Cross).

After his presentation, **we had our annual TOWN
swap meet.** There was an assortment
of outdoor gear to be had at bargain prices, and some
items were even given away for free to a good home!

*RoxAnn Donahoo, TOWN Club President
Sandy Thompson, TOWN Club Membership Chair*