



Texas Outdoors Woman Network

Happy New Year, Everyone!

Dear Fellow TOWN-Austin Members,

I know firsthand that you *Wonder Women* of TOWN-Austin have had a fun and productive 2010!

We had over 90 scheduled outings + impromptu ones + our Wednesday night paddling sessions. Over 40 members led outings or assisted with them. Our subgroups for camping, hiking, and kayaking functioned to encourage members to lead adventures as well. We are very fortunate and grateful that TOWN-Austin *Wonder*

Women step up and step out to lead our events.

At the close of 2010, we have nearly 100 members. This organization would not exist without you, and I send a big thank you from me to each of you!

If you think I'm excited, happy, and pleased about our 2010, you are correct! I'm proud to be your group coordinator, and I look forward to our 2011 together.

Happy New Year to you and your loved ones!

Best Wishes,

Jacque



Jacque Austin
Coordinator/President

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**Celebrating
15 Years of
Outdoor Fun!**

Upcoming Events

JANUARY

Jan 30 (Sun): Thank You outing for our Leaders.

FEBRUARY

Feb 11 - 13 (Fri-Sun): Weekend of camping and fun at Nails Creek State Park.

Feb 22 (Tue): Monthly Meeting at 6 p.m. Erin Coon (Hostel International) will present *Women Traveling Solo*. This should be really helpful to us all!

MARCH

Mar 12 (Sat): Austin Steam Train, Hill Country Flyer. 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Mar 22 (Tue): Monthly Meeting at 6 p.m. Kelli Hardin will talk with us about her experience hiking the entire

Appalachian Trail. This should be a real hoot!

Mar 25-27 (Fri-Sun): BOW Outing Open to all members of any TOWN group.

APRIL

Apr 1-10 (Fri-Sun): Camping at Big Bend National Park. TOWN members and partners (male or female) invited.

Apr 14-17 (Thu-Sat): Old Settlers Music Festival.

Apr 17 (Sun): Touring Chautura Canyon (members only). 8 a.m. - noon.

Apr 23-24 (Fri-Sat): Easter Hill Country Tour hosted by the Austin Cycling Association (ACA). Note: not a TOWN sponsored event.

Apr 26 (Tue): Monthly Meeting at 6 p.m. Karen Blizzard is a hiker and biker and works for Texas Parks and Wildlife

Department. Karen's presentation is entitled *Preparing for a Day Hike*.

Apr 29 - May 2 (Fri - Mon): Friends of Balcones Songbird Festival and Camping

MAY

May 24 (Tue): Monthly Meeting at 6 p.m. Dr. Dale Schaeffer will talk about skin protection, skin cancer, and what we should look for on our skin from poisonous plants and insects.

JUNE

Jun 28 (Tue): Monthly Meeting at 6 p.m. Speaker TBA.

JULY

July 8-18 (Fri-Mon): Camping at Davis Mountains State Park in Fort Davis, TX.

Jul 26 (Tue): Monthly Meeting at 6 p.m. Speaker TBA.

AUGUST

Aug 23 (Tue): Monthly Meeting at 6 p.m. Speaker TBA.

SEPTEMBER

Sep 16-18 (Fri-Sun): BOW Outing. Open to all members of any TOWN group.

Sep 27 (Tue): Monthly Meeting at 6 p.m. Emily Maline, REI instructor, will introduce rock climbing!

OCTOBER

Oct 25 (Tue): Monthly Meeting at 6 p.m. Speaker TBA.

NOVEMBER

Nov 22 (Tue): Monthly Meeting at 6 p.m. Potluck dinner first then exchange of "free stuff." We'll follow with a short business meeting and our annual election of Board members.

Trip Reports

Holiday Party at McKinney Falls State Park (January 7-9)

BELIEVE IT OR NOT! It was a perfect weekend for the January Holiday Party. It's true!

The weekend progressed perfectly for our activities at McKinney Falls. Thirty-three TOWN-Austin members, sixteen family members and friends, and two dogs joined the gathering to celebrate TOWN-Austin. We exceeded our expectations with a turnout of 51 attendees.

The Roll: Adela (& Annie), Amelia (& Snuggles), Andra (& Duane), BarbaraD, Bonnie, CarolB, CarolC, CarolynD, CarrieL, CindyF, Dawn, DebbieG, Eola, Evie, GloriaB, Jacque (& Steve), JanetFB (& Bruce), JaniceH, JudyD (& Mike), JudyL, JuneA, KarenP, LindaF, LindaW1 (& Tom)/c, LisaW (& Connie), MarieW (& Mike), MarilynF (& Larry), Nance, Peggy, Sallie, SandyB, SandyO, Sarah (& Aidan), SusanW (& Liz, Stephanie, Amy), and TammyW (& Sam & Brendan).



Friday: Campers arrived mostly before sunset, so we managed a three mile walk on the paved trail. Nine of us adjourned to Patsy's Café for dinner and music. We enjoyed catfish, veggie burgers, salads, chicken fried steak, nachos, veggies, soup, and someone even had dessert. We listened to the band for a while then headed back to the campground. Four women stayed in two shelters and eight of us camped in various arrangements.

Since there is a burn ban in effect, could not have a campfire for visiting which to early nights for the campers.

Saturday 8 a.m.: A group of us met at the Smith Visitors' Center for the Travis Audu-

bon Beginners' Bird Walk led by Shirley LaVergne. Though we walked less than a mile, we saw some outstanding birds (see bird list at the end of the article).

10 a.m.: CarolynD led a group of 10 for a three mile hike along the Homestead Trail. Water is down at the falls so it was convenient to cross.

1 p.m.: JanetFB led four of us on a pretty rowdy bike ride beginning first on the paved path and then to the Homestead

pie, chocolate cupcakes, and cookies. No one walked away hungry!

White Elephant Gift Exchange: led this year by JanetFB and JudyD; as usual, this generated lots of fun and laughs. Some items will be consumed and used, some will show up again next January, and others will end up in a dark hole. More chocolate, tea, and coffee this year. Most unusual chocolate item: Chocolate wine.

And ... we managed to complete all our activities before the rain started late Saturday evening. What more could we ask!

Bird and mammal list: Carolina wren, black vulture, red-bellied woodpecker, yellow-bellied sapsucker (at least seven), phoebe, ruby-crowned kinglet, hermit thrush, mourning dove, green kingfisher, mockingbird, white winged dove, yellow-rumped warbler, sharp-shinned hawk, cedar wax-wings, robin, golden-

Trail for loose rocks and lots of twists.

2 p.m.: GloriaB led a group for a three mile walk along the trail by Onion Creek to the upper falls on the Rock Shelter Trail, to the giant cypress tree, and ending at the lower falls. Afterward, CarolC, CarolynD, Evie, and Sarah (with son Aidan) continued to hike a total of nine miles.

Judging by the laughter and screams, members and guests enjoyed playing a variety of games during the afternoon.

Pot Luck: Lots of variety in our selections this year which included appetizers, chili, fried chicken, potatoes, chips and guacamole, various salads and veggies, pecan

crowned kinglet, chickadee, red winged blackbird, cotton tail bunny, momma tiger (and two babies), water buffalo (2), bobcat, T. rex, leopard, and baboon (male).

Thanks to GloriaB, CarolynD, and JanetFB for volunteering to lead our hiking and biking. June and CarolynD, thanks for organizing the food arrangements. To all the women who assisted with setting up and taking down the tables and chairs – **THANK YOU!**

Our annual Holiday Party in January occurs because everyone volunteers and pitches in to get stuff done.

I love it!

~Jacque

Tell your friends about TOWN! Membership is only \$20 a year!

Trip Reports

Camping at Goose Island State Park (December 27-January 1)

Four TOWNlies (PauletteB, BeverlyT, JoanC, and Judy D) camped at Goose Island State Park. Paulette and Beverly camped in Paulette's popup; Joan and I shared a campsite and tent camped.

Paulette & Beverly got there on Monday and had already gone on a charter fishing outing and caught their limit of redfish for the day. From then on they kept trekking to HEB for dry ice. On Wednesday they went kayak fishing and Paulette caught a 27" Redfish which she cleaned that night! Wow!

I got there Wednesday afternoon and set up my tent in the wooded area thinking I would be more protected from the wind and cool. However, Joan arrived later in the afternoon and wanted to camp on the bay near Paulette and Beverly. She offered to help me move my tent to her campsite, so we did. Later that evening we went to Paulette and Beverly's campsite and sampled Paulette's fish stew and Beverly's ceviche both of which were delicious.

Thursday morning the four of us visited Aransas Wildlife Refuge where we were

able to see the Whooping Cranes from a distance. Afterward, we had lunch at Moondog's on the harbor in Fulton. B & T had eaten their fill of fried oysters there earlier. From there Joan and I drove to Rockport and Aransas Pass. The Port A ferry boat ride wait was 45 minutes so

flying across the water. We even got a look at a Dolphin and many other birds. After the tour we had lunch in Aransas Pass at the Big Fisherman Restaurant.

Joan mentioned that she had never eaten boiled shrimp so we stopped at HEB for shrimp, cocktail sauce, and cold slaw. We prepared the shrimp later at our campsite. Joan will be eating boiled shrimp again soon!

Joan left early the next morning; she had to go to work at 1:00. I got up a little later. My departure turned out to be more of an adventure than I had anticipated. The wind was gusting around 20mph that morning. Need I say more? As I was packing up the tent got away from me and blew into the bay. After locating it, which took a while, I rolled up my pants legs and

waded out to retrieve it. All the time I was wondering if REI would give a refund for a tent that blew away. Anyway, after pulling it out of the water and breaking it down I was on my way. Thank goodness the water in the bay is shallow.

~JudyD



The Big Tree

we never made it there. That evening the four of us visited in P's popup until time for sleep.

Friday morning B & P left for home and Joan and I went on the 7:30 a.m. Whooping Crane tour. The tour was great! We got good looks at the Whooping Cranes and saw huge flocks of Lesser Scaups

Lady Bird Lake Hike (January 15)

It turned out to be a gray, rainy day. I went out to Lady Bird Lake at 9 a.m. and hung around by the pedestrian bridge under Mopac for about 30 minutes to see if any Townies decided to venture out. Since I was there and dressed for the weather, I took off to hike solo. If you were there and I missed you somehow, I'm sorry.

I started walking east. There were tons of runners out and quite a few rowers on the water. I saw the swan family from the bridge and lots of ducks. They don't mind

getting wet either. It didn't rain very hard, just a light mist most of the time. The temperature was perfect. I was thinking how much I would miss this feeling when August hits again. I decided to turn around at the Congress Bridge instead of going all the way to I-35. I took a few side trails on the way back – part of the Zilker Park Loop and explored around Barton Springs Pool a little. All together I walked 5.5 miles.

It was fun and reminded me of how much I enjoyed playing in the rain as a

kid. The only thing I regret is not jumping in a puddle. I should have done that. There is always next time I guess.

~Carolyn



TOWN Austin

P.O. Box 300494
Austin, Texas 78703-0009

Monthly Meeting Location

LCRA's Redbud Center
3601 Lake Austin Blvd.
Austin, TX 78703
(512)473-3535

Our Mission

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

Your TOWN Austin Leadership Team

Coordinator/President

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Visit us on the Web
www.townaustin.org

About TOWN Austin

Texas Outdoors Woman Network (TOWN) is an offshoot of the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department's *Becoming an Outdoors Woman* (BOW) program. Our goal is to enable outdoor oriented women to meet and build friendships with women who have similar interests. Local chapters have monthly meetings and outings which are initiated, planned, and conducted by members. Read about TOWN Austin's history by reading about our origins online.

Monthly meetings are the fourth Tuesday of each month at the LCRA Redbud Center (3601 Lake Austin Blvd). We begin at 6 p.m. Bring a snack or your brown-bag dinner. The business meeting begins about 6:30. Bring a drink and join us for special announcements, guest speaker, and socializing. Please see our online calendar for details.

Our outings occur on a regular basis. We offer a wide variety of activities. Visit our online calendar to check out what is happening next.

We'd love to show you what TOWN Austin is all about! Prospective members are invited to join us for a couple of outings before becoming an official member!

Our activities include, but are not limited to the following:

- Archery
- Backpacking
- Bird Watching
- Camping
- Day hiking
- Kayaking/Canoeing
- Fishing/Flyfishing
- Horseback riding
- Mountain biking and road biking
- Geocaching

Most trips are planned with minimal cost in mind. We try to carpool and donate for gas. You are always welcomed to create your own carpool when possible. Lodging costs are divided among the participants. Additional costs may be incurred such as State Park entrance fees or tour fees.

Interested in leading a TOWN Austin outing?

It's really quite simple and we can always use more leaders. A checklist is available to help you plan an outing so you don't forget anything. There is also a liability release form everyone should sign at the beginning of each outing. See the website for a list of outings we would like to take, but have not yet scheduled.



Cafe Press offers TOWN Austin t-shirts and other wonderful products.

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