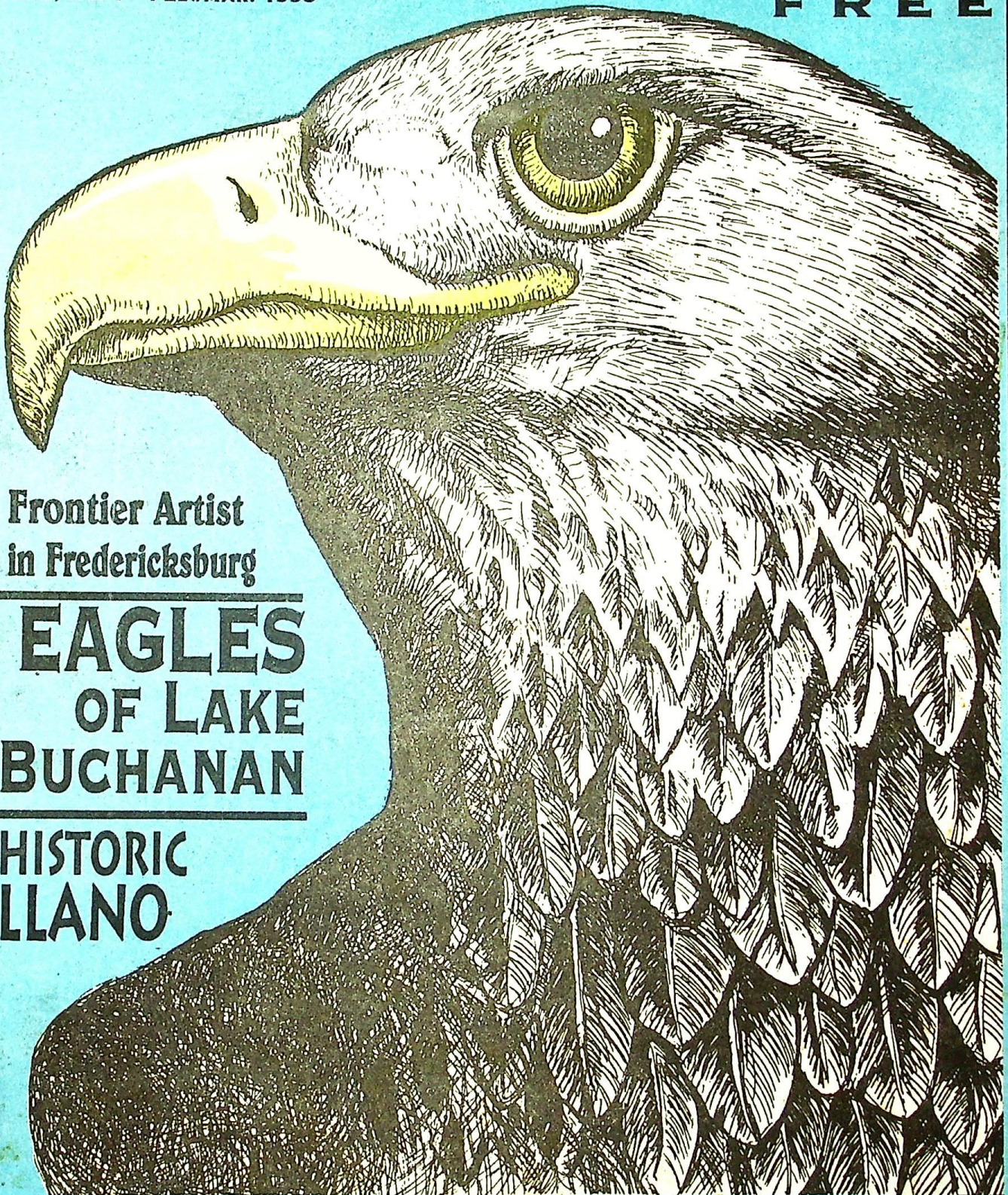


# ENCHANTED ROCK

M A G A Z I N E

Vol.2, No. 1 FEB./MAR. 1995

FREE



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in Fredericksburg

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**EAGLES**  
OF LAKE  
BUCHANAN

---

HISTORIC  
LLANO

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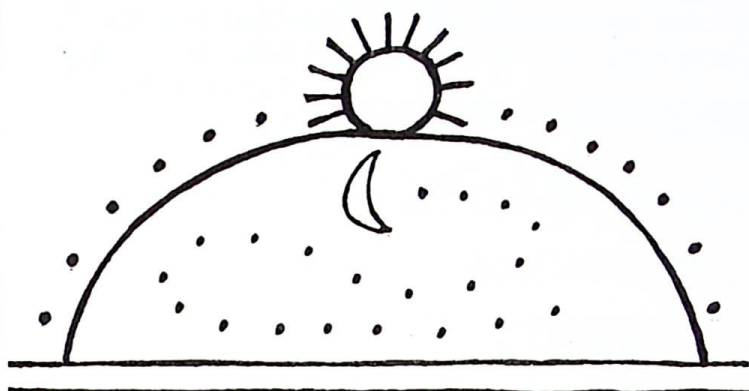


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On April 1, *Enchanted Rock Magazine* is sponsoring a Star Party at Crabapple Crossing Country Store five miles north of Enchanted Rock State Natural Area on Ranch Road 965. In addition to locating the major stars and planets, participants will view galaxy clusters and constellations through an 18-inch telescope. Your guides to this adventure will be Chris Alton, staff writer on astronomy for *Enchanted Rock Magazine*, and Scott Mgbroff.

Stonewall Chili Pepper Company will be on hand serving up a variety of their award-winning salsas for the event. The Star Party is free and open to the public.

The Star Party will begin around 7:30 p.m. If the sky is overcast, Ira Kennedy will give a talk on the history, legends, and myths of Enchanted Rock. Campsites and RV sites are available by reservation at Crabapple Crossing. Phone 915/247-4260.

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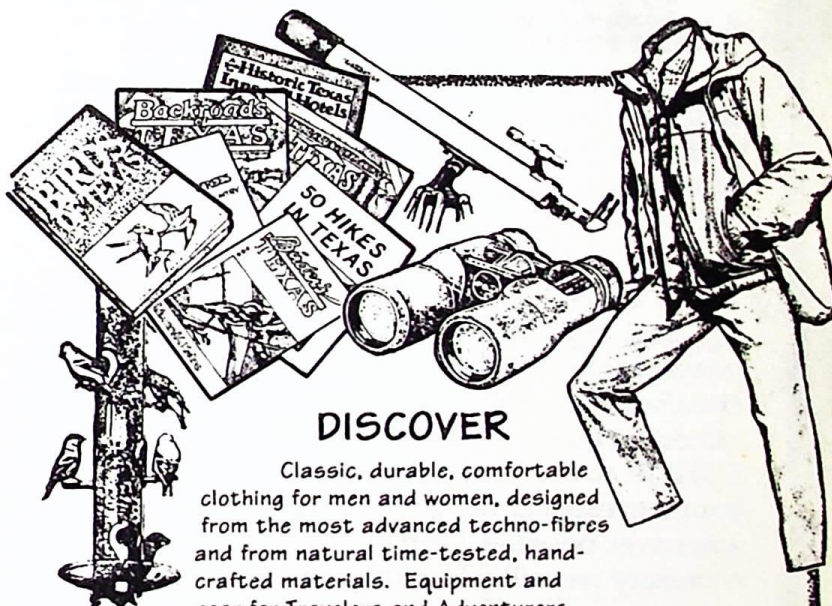
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## WE'RE A MONTHLY

**B**eginning with our next issue, April 1995, *Enchanted Rock Magazine* will be published monthly. When I began this enterprise, as a bi-monthly newsletter, I had no idea it would become a magazine, let alone a monthly. It evolved in that direction through the support of advertisers and the encouragement and able assistance of friends. This decision has necessitated a few changes:

### SUBSCRIPTIONS

The subscription rate is changing from \$15 for 6 issues to \$25 for 12 issues. With the recent increases in postal rates, and the larger size of the magazine this is the best offer we can make for those wanting an annual subscription.

### BACK ISSUES

A complete set of back issues—volume one, numbers one through six — is available for \$40 postpaid. The supply is limited. Apart from those in volumes, no back copies of this publication are available.

### LETTERS

Beginning with the next issue we will begin a letters column. We will reprint your comments, criticisms, suggestions, praise, etc. All letters submitted for publication should be addressed TO THE EDITOR so that we know you are willing to share your correspondence to us with the public. Please, whenever possible, keep your letters brief. When necessary we will edit letters for clarity and length.

### MANUSCRIPTS

We accept unsolicited manuscripts from our readers. All manuscripts should be sent with a self-addressed stamped envelop if you want them returned. All articles should be well-researched and all reference material should be either submitted with the manuscript, or if that isn't possible a bibli-

ography must be provided so the facts can be checked. The names and phone numbers of all persons interviewed must be provided with the manuscript. All writers should keep in mind

*Enchanted Rock Magazine* is a natural resource for discovery, adventure, and knowledge in Central Texas, the Hill Country, the Llano Uplift, the Edwards Plateau, the Central Mineral

Region, La Lomeria, the Balcones Escarpment, the Highland Lakes, and the Enchanted Rock. Enjoy and join in the adventure.



IRA KENNEDY

**ENCHANTED ROCK MAGAZINE  
IS A NATURAL RESOURCE  
FOR DISCOVERY, ADVENTURE,  
AND KNOWLEDGE...**

## ENCHANTED ROCK MAGAZINE

HC 09, BOX 34B, LLANO, TX 78643 PHONE/FAX: 915/247-3067

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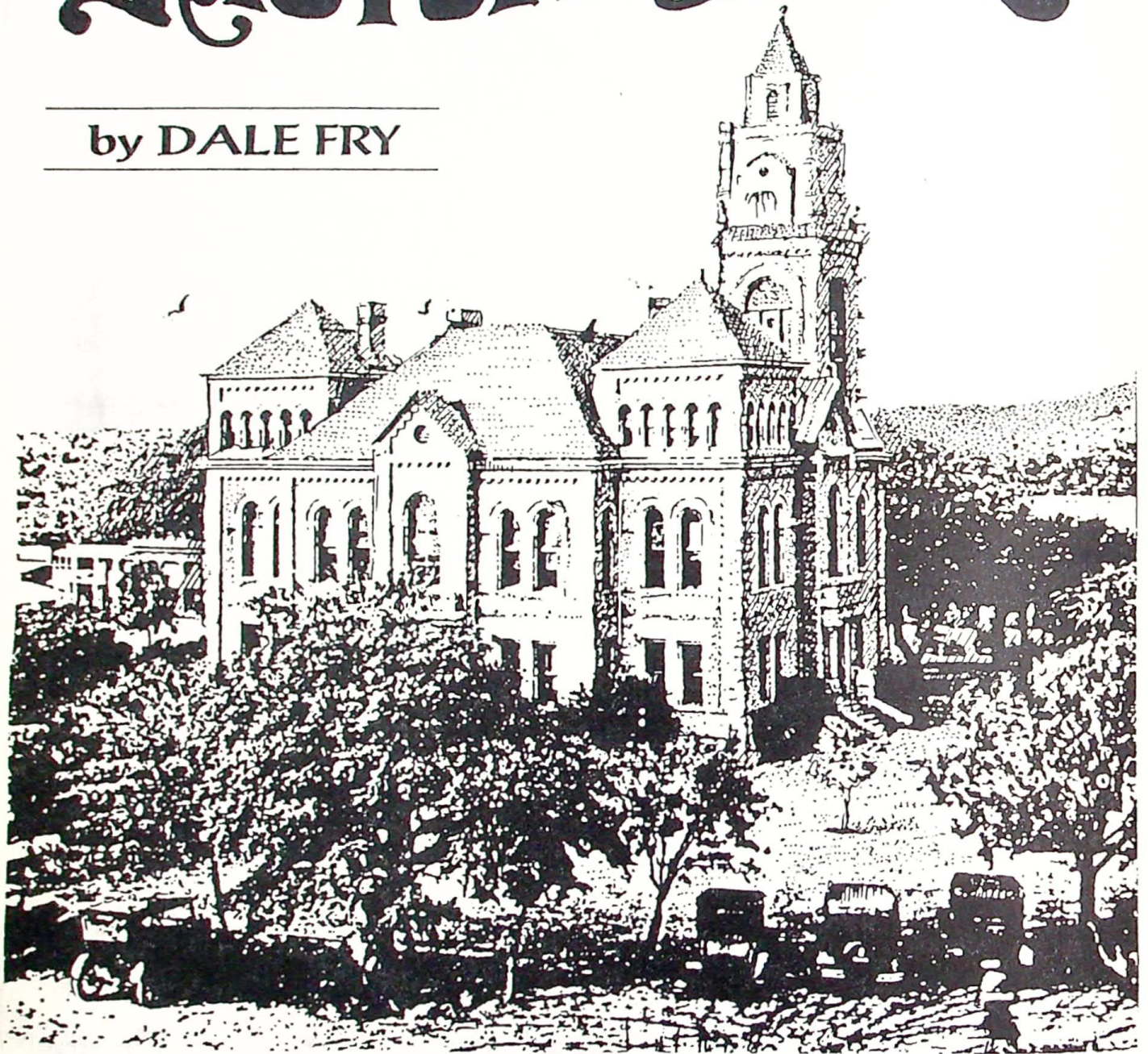
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# Historic Llano

by DALE FRY



Vivid images of early Texas and the Old West still linger in the quaint little town of Llano, where time seems to have stood still in a grand effort to retain the city's heritage. Couple that with the celebrated geological composition of the surrounding county, and you have a unique area worthy of endless exploration.

**T**he county and city of Llano are important locales for a number of reasons. In 1977, the National Register of Historical Places listed Llano's entire downtown, located on the banks of the spring-fed Llano River, as a National Historical District.

This district encompasses some 65 structures which include the courthouse square, a rustic stone ice house rising from the waters of the river, an adjacent dam forming a downtown lake and a bridge of overhead steel spans.

Remnants still remain of the stone and cement piers of a low-water crossing hastily constructed just below the dam after the great flood of 1935 wiped out the town's original iron bridge.

This historical district is home to many distinctive structures reflecting the town's early Texas image. Towering above them all, the Llano County courthouse, erected in 1893, is the 39th oldest of the 284 courthouses in the state, and is one of only 66 left that arose before 1900. In addition, it is one of only a handful that remain with no additions to the original structure.

Another interesting building is Llano County's 1895 jail, a massive, multi-storied Romanesque Revival structure built entirely of large blocks of local granite. Listed as an Historical Texas Landmark in 1979, this building serves today as headquarters for the Llano Chapter of the Daughters of the Republic of Texas, which utilizes the various large rooms of the first floor for meetings and social functions.

The jailer's office, living quarters and kitchen originally occupied the first floor, two rooms of which were heated by fireplaces built into the corners back-to-back. These fireplaces and their original wooden mantles remain to this day. The second floor contained four cells and two "drunk tanks," and the top floor, the jail's square, window-enclosed tower, housed the gallows. (Fortunately, the county never had to use this forboding space.) The gallows are still there.

The jail's black roof, originally red, provided the building's nickname. Early day inmates often spoke of "staying over at the old Red Top." It is said also that in later years the jail earned a certain amount of "fame" for the tasty breakfasts served there. Area drunks admonished fellow imbibers, "If you're going to get drunk and wind up in jail, make sure it's in Llano; at least you can get a decent breakfast there."

Worthy of mention also are three brick and granite buildings built in the teens that today house the county's large, modern library. The county restored the facades of each of the buildings, which adjoin one another, and removed the inner walls to create several areas inside one large, multi-purpose room. The two high end walls of this large room were stripped of plaster to reveal their original brown sandstone rocks.

After Llano received national historical designation a flurry of restoration began, and today its quaint buildings

house a number of interesting shops dispensing antiques, clothes, furniture, gourmet food, cappuccino, old fashioned soda fountain treats, arts, crafts, gifts, bakery items, and other shoppers' delights.

Locals, in addition, have capitalized on the bed and breakfast boom, and visitors may enjoy an unforgettable stay in rustic lodgings that include a semi-primitive hotel overlooking the Llano River and five beds and breakfasts, each furnished in the style of a bygone era. Two of the beds and breakfasts are located in the rugged countryside and offer serenity in scenic surroundings.

**Llano County owes its fame primarily to the fact that it is a repository for one of the largest concentrations of minerals in the nation. Since no agency has ever conducted a complete soil analysis of the county, no one really knows how many different minerals exist here besides the 240 reputedly already discovered.**

One writer referred to Llano County as nature's wonderland with good reason, for this is indeed a remarkable geographic region. Here, several sciences converge to form a natural wonderland that has long enjoyed renown in scientific circles.

Here, nature's awesome forces, working tirelessly over eons, have created classic rock formations, rare plant life, a spring-fed river noted for its scenic beauty, gold, silver, uranium, rare earth minerals—some of them the rarest in the world—and a rich assortment of others.

Llano County is a part of what geologists call the Central Mineral Region, the Mineral Basin, the Llano Basin and the Llano Uplift. This uplift encompasses five central Texas counties—Llano, Burnet, San Saba, Mason and Gillespie—and covers some 1.5 million acres. Llano County is near the center of this massive uplift. The city itself lies within roughly 70 miles of the geographic center of the state.

Scientists say the Llano Uplift is incredibly old. This area, considered one of the oldest in the United States, is also numbered among the oldest in the world. Only the painstaking passage of a mind-boggling 1,200 million (one billion, 200 million) years, scientists say, could have produced this geological phenomenon.

That an uplift can also be considered a basin seems contradictory, nevertheless this region is indeed both. Nature, with a magnificent flourish, wielding laws of heat, cold, water and wind, formed the two in one. Structurally it is a dome—an uplift—but due to erosion, topographi-

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The erosion by water which helped create the Llano Basin within the uplift is attributed primarily to the numerous springs of the Edwards Plateau. This enormous limestone tableland, bordering the uplift, contains some of the greatest springs in the United States.

cally it is a basin, its outer edges reaching a height of 1,000 feet.

This famed formation began its growth approximately 1,200 million years ago in an ancient trough some 65 miles across at its widest point. This trough formed unknown years earlier as the result of tremendous heat raging deep in the primeval earth.

This inferno produced titanic pressure which caused the inner structure to shift. The ground surface far above, fragile in the face of such fury, sank in, leaving a sink so large that five present-day Central Texas counties could have fit into it.

For millions of years afterward, nature gradually filled this trough, alternating with covering seas of water which

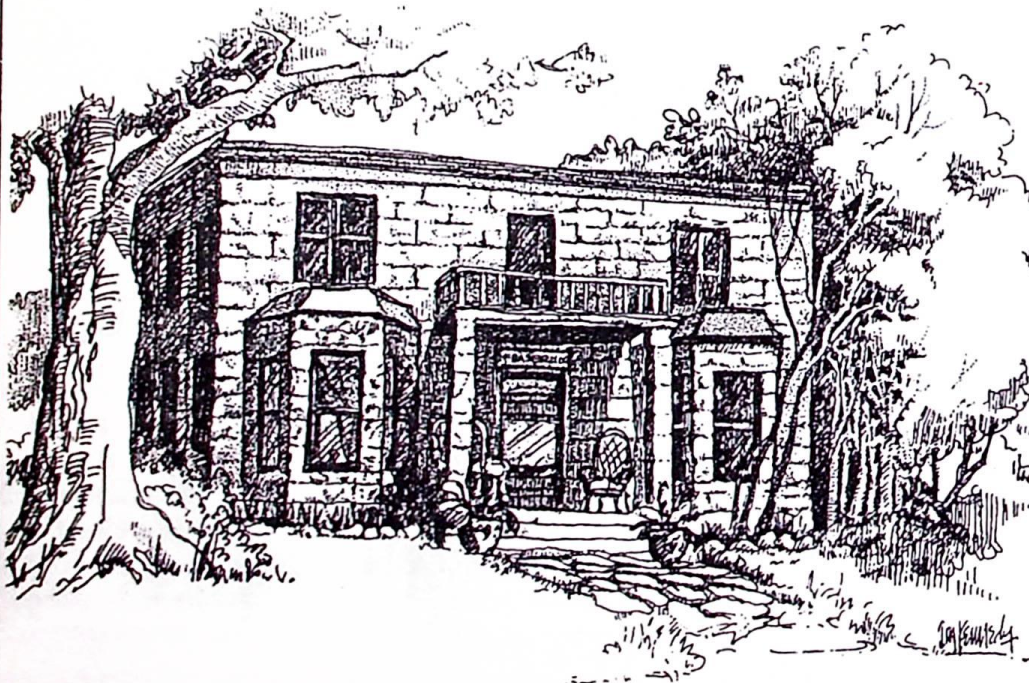
deposited sediments, and with periods of searing heat which solidified the sediments. During these alternating periods, the inner earth, seething with mega-temperatures, propelled masses of molten granite upward with such force that these fiery "plugs" penetrated the trough's floor and towered into the solidifying mass. Later these plugs, some as much as 10 miles wide, hardened.

Intervals of severe upwarpings and foldings saw other molten intrusions fill the resulting openings. These fiery intrusions contained a myriad combination of organic particles which, when subjected to heat-induced compression, produced certain varieties of the elements known today as minerals. Various combinations of these minerals created, in turn, the different granites and the other seemingly endless variety of rocks for which Llano County is famous.

In addition, the exciting discovery of delicate ice crystal impressions, excellently preserved, reveals that low temperatures invaded the area some 550 million years ago. This caused severe contractions which formed great fissures. Into these, the bowels of the erratic earth flung more molten rock, creating some of the beautiful wedges of multi-colored strata seen throughout the uplift. After this one bout with cold the area resumed its former growth pattern, a pattern which eventually pushed the uplift skyward an incredible 10,000 feet before erosion reduced it to its present level of 1,000 feet.

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Erosion, in the form of water and wind, shaped this celebrated uplift in alternating periods. But it was not until a relatively recent five million years ago that the unimpeded erosion required to sculpt the area as we see it today, began. This uninterrupted erosion is still at work, though so slowly that we cannot always perceive its activity.

The erosion by water which helped create the Llano Basin within the uplift is attributed primarily to the numerous springs of the Edwards Plateau. This enormous limestone tableland, bordering the uplift, contains some of the greatest springs in the United States.

The largest of these, found at the edge of the plateau along the Balcones Fault Line, along with other large springs gushing from deep in the plateau's interior, have carved great channels into the limestone. From there they flow directly into the Llano Uplift. Among these large springs are the famous Seven Hundred Springs of the Upper Southern Llano Valley near Junction.

To envision how erosion shaped the basin in the uplift, picture a mound of earth and stone 10,000 feet high covering 1.5 millions acres. Now envision a gigantic source of water—a "water hose"—rushing forth near the top at the rate of millions of gallons an hour. At the same time, erosion is at work in the areas surrounding the mound.

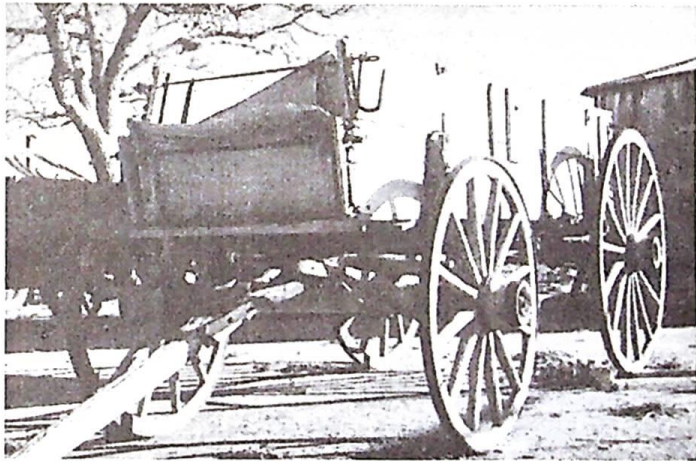
The relentless pressure of the water carves pathways through the mound which widen and deepen and create even more openings. Some of these fork, only to converge again. Earth is washed away from stones in the mound,

Llano County owes its fame primarily to the fact that it is a repository for one of the largest concentrations of minerals in the nation. Since no agency has ever conducted a complete soil analysis of the county, no one really knows how many different minerals exist here besides the 240 reputedly already discovered.

exposing them to further erosion by wind whipping across their vulnerable surfaces. (Some of the earth is left deposited in crevices and between stones from which air-borne and water-transported seeds will spring into life, creating foliage.)

Because granite stones at the bottom of this mound are not as soft as other stones in areas surrounding the mound, the dome is left higher in the air, while water and wind erode the surrounding areas to a lower level. Some of the stones higher in the mound are softer than those at the bottom, and erode away. Thus, erosion-resistant stones at

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Adding to the importance of this geological wonder, several species of plants which the Smithsonian Institute considers rare and endangered grow on or near the Rock's base. One of these, the Basin Bellflower, a delicate, light blue flower, is found only on granite outcroppings of the Llano region. Growing in profusion along the lower slopes of the Rock, this is the only site where the endangered species is protected.

landscape. Here and there, between these time-forged peaks, streams carry water from the hollow caverns of the Edwards Plateau.

The Llano River is one of the streams fed by these plentiful springs. Of the 3,700 streams in Texas, this river is noted for its scenic beauty and is considered among the state's top 50 secondary streams of at least 50 miles in length. Snaking its way through several Texas counties, the ancient Llano courses through parts of the Llano Uplift for 100 miles before emptying into the Colorado River near the eastern boundary of Llano County at Kingsland.

This scenic river leaves in its artistic wake sculptured rock formations afire with color and texture from their varied mineral content. Some of these minerals, such as feldspar, mica and pyrite, sparkle in the sunlight, dazzling the eye.

Llano County owes its fame primarily to the fact that it is a repository for one of the largest concentrations of minerals in the nation. Since no agency has ever conducted a complete soil analysis of the county, no one really knows how many different minerals exist here besides the 240 reputedly already discovered. But one fact is known: this quantity, presumed to exist within an area of only 600,000 square acres, is unprecedented in Texas and possibly in the entire world.

Some of these minerals are extremely rare. One of these, llanite, is found no where else in the world but in Llano County—and in only one, 14-mile long area here.

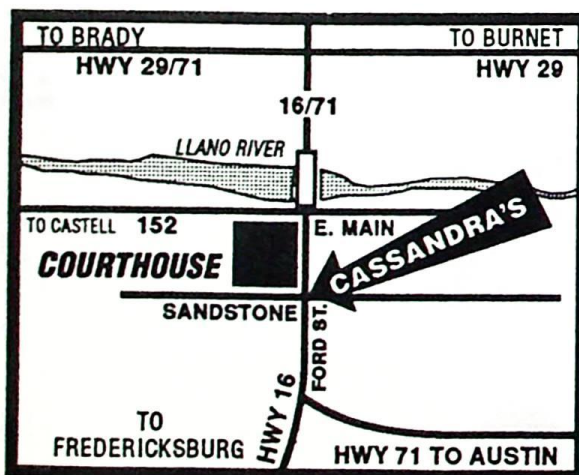
the bottom of the Llano Uplift have maintained an uplift, while less resistant stones higher up have given way to erosion by springs issuing from the Edwards Plateau.

Out of this shaping came forth a basin, its outer edges reduced now to 1,000 feet. Rugged peaks and hills jut upward throughout the basin, a jagged masterpiece of

SEE HISTORIC LLANO, PAGE 46

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# THE OPEN FRONTIER



**FRIEDRICHBURG, TEXAS**—THIS LITHOGRAPH BY HERMAN LUNGKWITZ IS ONE OF THE ARTIST'S BEST KNOWN WORKS. ADVERTISEMENTS FOR THIS WORK APPEARED IN GERMAN-LANGUAGE NEWSPAPERS IN TEXAS DURING THE LATE 1850'S.

MEUSEBACH'S TREATY WITH THE COMANCHE OPENED THE FRONTIER TO SETTLEMENT. THE WESTWARD EXPANSION OF TEXAS, COUNTY BY COUNTY, WAS PROTECTED BY A CHAIN OF FORTS. THE TREATY ALLOWED SURVEYORS INTO THE THE AREA. WITH ACCURATE MAPS THE LAND COULD BE NOT ONLY SETTLED BUT ALSO CLAIMED BY DEED OF OWNERSHIP. WITH NEW SETTLEMENTS ENCHANTED ROCK BECAME MORE THAN A POINT ON A MAP SURROUNDED BY MYSTERY AND LEGEND.

---

**IRA KENNEDY**

---

**A** German settler arrived in Fredericksburg in 1851 who would, in his own way, leave his mark on the history of Enchanted Rock. An accomplished landscape painter trained in Dresden, Hermann Lungkwitz was the first artist to capture on canvas the mood and mystery of this legendary landmark. In his romantic style the artist greatly exaggerated the contours of Enchanted Rock in order to capture the spiritual nature of his subject.

His first landscape of Enchanted Rock was completed in 1866, but he was to return to the site many times. In a letter to a friend he wrote of one of his painting expeditions in 1888: "I found and painted a few charming views of Enchanted Rock and the neighboring mountain ridges from my position on a very precipitous peak called the Rauhenkopf. To reach my point of observation, I had to hike one and a half miles every day through mesquite brush and over rocky ground without any path. Regretfully I was unable to walk a further mile for a full view of the Wachtenauer [Watch Mountain] and Kullhead [Bullhead] Mountains, so I concluded my studies here for this time, also, because I could not find any lodging near these imposing mountains.

"Within the radius of six miles, one cannot find any human habitation—one can only camp out... I lived very simply here, spent every day in the good, very dry air and was in very good health, so that I could easily carry my twenty pounds of paraphernalia up the steep mountain. Then I painted very diligently from early morning until sundown. After returning to my lodging, I would fall into a deep, sound sleep, only to wake up before dawn, fully refreshed—and so day after day!"

Lungkwitz painted at least six landscapes of Enchanted Rock between the 1850s and the 1880s. Over the years he created numerous works of the Hill Country including scenes of New Braunfels, Sisterdale, Fredericksburg, Mount Bonnell, San Antonio, West Cave, Hamilton Pool, and Marble Falls. In all of his paintings Lungkwitz managed to capture in meticulous detail and faithful color the beauty and brilliance of the natural environment. Of particular note are Lungkwitz's large pencil drawings executed in lines so sharp they have a quality found in the finest of etchings.

Lungkwitz was not alone in his artistic endeavors. His brother-in-law, Richard Petri, came to Texas at the same time and settled in Fredericksburg. Unlike the landscape painter Lungkwitz, Petri painted numerous portraits and scenes of pioneer life in their new homeland. Petri's paintings of the Comanche and Lipan Indians which frequented Fredericksburg have been of particular interest to researchers.

Petri died in 1857, at the age of thirty-three, from accidental drowning in the Pedernales River. The legacy of paintings he and Lungkwitz left behind are remarkable both in their historic and artistic value.

**I FOUND AND  
PAINTED A FEW  
CHARMING VIEWS  
OF ENCHANTED  
ROCK AND THE  
NEIGHBORING  
MOUNTAIN  
RIDGES FROM MY  
POSITION ON A  
VERY PRECIPITOUS  
PEAK CALLED THE  
RAUENKOPF. TO  
REACH MY POINT  
OF OBSERVATION,  
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## THE OPEN FRONTIER

CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

Around 1847, the Texas Rangers established a camp fourteen miles north of Fredericksburg in the immediate vicinity of Enchanted Rock, under the leadership of Captain Samuel Highsmith. In *Recollections of Early Texas: Memoirs of John Holland Jenkins*, the author, a member of the Highsmith company, wrote that Enchanted Rock was "a very remarkable freak of nature, being solid granite and covering an area of six hundred and forty acres of land." He went on to describe the landmark. "It is studded here and there with a kind of glittering material that resembles diamonds."

## THE GOLD RUSH OF 1849

Discovery of gold in California in 1849 precipitated a rush of emigrants seeking their fortunes. Fredericksburg became the last supply stop for the forty-niners until they reached Hueco Tanks located near El Paso. A member of one of the wagon trains, C. C. Cox, was assigned to hunt game for the group. Upon reaching Enchanted Rock, though not mentioning it by name, he said it was a granite hill some "two hundred feet high." Cox noticed a hollow sound beneath the granite caused by his horse's hooves. "The surface of the mound had the appearance of petrified sand," and Cox attempted to break through into what the

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imagined would be a large cavern beneath. He finally abandoned the task once he realized there was no cave, but only a small hollow near the surface.

**T**he last recorded conflict between Indians and whites in the Hill Country occurred in 1873. Known as the Fight on Packsaddle Mountain, it was precipitated when a cow on the Moss ranch (in what is now Llano County) came into the ranch house with an arrow sticking out of its side. A party of eight ranchers, including W. B. Moss and his two brothers, was raised to pursue the Indians. They found approximately twenty-one Indians encamped on Packsaddle Mountain. In the ensuing fight at least three Indians, probably Apache, were killed and three of the ranchers wounded. So closed the last account of Indian warfare in the region.

With the lands surveyed, and settlements springing all along the frontier, the Indian tribes were rapidly becoming a relic of the past. As the twentieth century approached Enchanted Rock was becoming a recreational destination. The Moss family is central to the closing chapter of the old ways and the opening of the new.

In 1886, Enchanted Rock was purchased by John R. Moss, who sold it in less than a year to J. D. Slator, and C. T. and A. F. Moss. In 1896 the Moss family bought out Slator's interest, which was inherited by Tate Moss in 1927.

Although ownership of Enchanted Rock changed hands frequently, a constant throughout the twentieth century has been its use as parkland. At the outset of this century Enchanted Rock was frequently open to the public for picnics, dances, parties, and numerous other events, including religious service held on its summit by the Reverend Dan Moore.

Enchanted Rock officially opened to the general public as a privately operated park on June 22, 1927. The event was celebrated by thousands of visitors, including Governor Dan Moody, who dedicated Enchanted Rock as "Texas most wonderful summer resort." The highlight of the day, however, occurred when a celebrant named Bradshaw drove his brand new Pontiac to the summit.

Albert Faltin purchased Enchanted Rock in 1946, selling an undivided half-interest to Charles H. Moss the following year. For decades afterward the Moss family continued the tradition of operating Enchanted Rock as a private park. Finally, in 1978 they decided to sell the place and deverse offers came in—from granite quarry operations to one Dallas developer who planned to build some high-dollar townhouses. It is to the everlasting credit of Charles and Ruth Moss that they decided to reject those offers in favor of an offer from the Nature Conservancy who held title for Enchanted Rock until the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department could allocate funds to purchase the tract a month later.

So it was that this ancient sacred landmark became one of the state's most remarkable natural treasures, attracting over 250,000 visitors annually.



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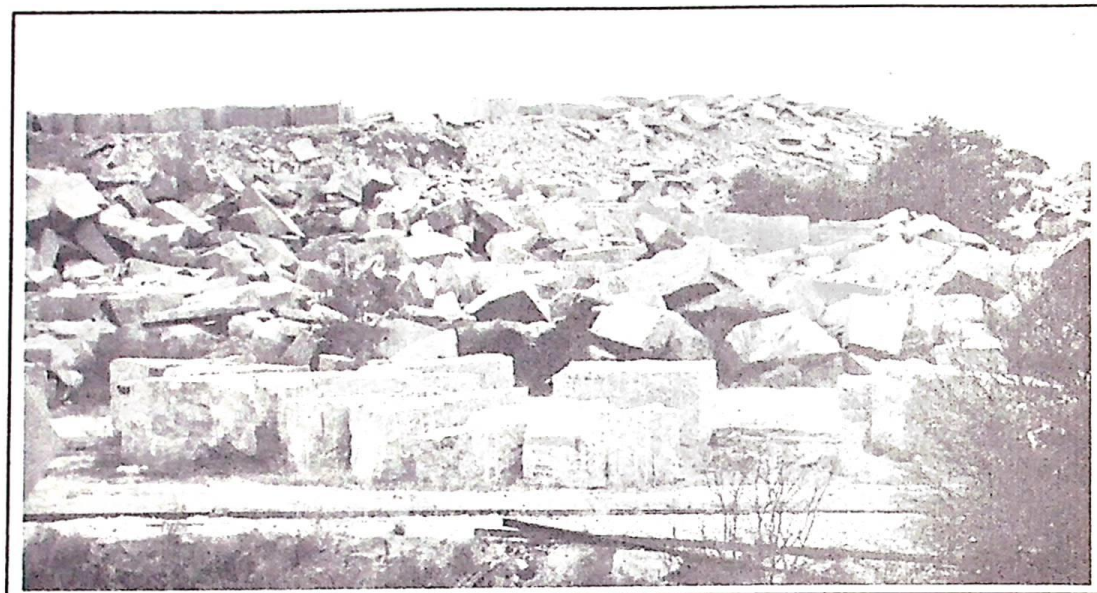
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# DO OTHER ENCHANTED ROCKS EXIST?

**GRANITE MOUNTAIN IN MARBLE FALLS.** THIS BATHOLITH HAS BEEN A GRANITE QUARRY SINCE THE 1850'S WHEN PRISON LABOR WAS USED TO PROVIDE THE BUILDING MATERIALS FOR THE TEXAS STATE CAPITAL. PHOTO: IRA KENNEDY



**H**ave you ever wondered about this simple question? Of course, there is only one Enchanted Rock here in Texas, but there are many granite outcrops and small domes in what the geologists call the Central Mineral region which encompasses Llano County and parts of the surrounding counties. Granite Mountain near Marble Falls is a good example. There are also a few other geological oddities in the area. If you came to Enchanted Rock via Fredericksburg on FM 965, you passed right by one of them.

Three miles north of Fredericksburg is a granite knob called Bear Mountain, which is presently being quarried for its world-famous deep red granite. What

is so odd, is that the nearest granite outcrop is over twelve miles away at Enchanted Rock. The red granite is age-dated at approximately one billion years and completely surrounded by eighty million year old Cretaceous sediments. So, like Enchanted Rock, Bear Mountain too was once an island surrounded by Cretaceous seas. It probably had pterodactyls landing on its summit and dinosaurs sunning among its boulders.

**According to the Hill Country Underground Water District in Fredericksburg, the town of Stonewall sits directly on a granite dome. The "summit" of the dome is below the Rodeo arena—about sixty feet down.**

Are there other oddities in the area? Indeed there are! According to the Hill Country Underground Water District in Fredericksburg the town of Stonewall sits directly on a granite dome. The "summit" of the dome is below the rodeo arena—about 60 feet down. This is one reason why the water wells within the townsite produce little or no water.

There is another buried granite dome two miles northwest of Fredericksburg, an another approximately four and one-half miles north of the city near Achtzen Road and FM 965.

The next question you may ask is "How long will

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we have to wait before we can enjoy the spectacle of these granite domes?" Don't hold your breath. Even if we assume a liberal estimate of six inches of erosion per one hundred years, that would still mean a wait of twelve thousand years before granite might be exposed on the surface in Stonewall.

Until then, Enchanted Rock will have a monopoly on all the beautiful scenery, hiking trails, land camping spots in such a unique setting in Texas. So let's enjoy it NOW!

## HOT ROCKS IN LAKE BUCHANAN

**A** geologist, William E. Hidden, was doing mineralogical research in 1905 on Baringer Hill, an ore deposit in Llano County. He stated that in mining ore of the largest pockets of rare earth metal minerals, the faces and hands of himself and his assistant were affected as if by sunburn. We now know that some of these minerals are highly radioactive. Such are the hazards of scientific research. Baringer Hill Mine is now covered by the waters of Lake Buchanan. —JIM CHUDE

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# CALENDAR IN THE SKY

**S**ince we reside north of the Tropic of Cancer, 23 and 1/2 degrees north latitude, the 2nd of February is a significant day for all of us who have grown weary of Winter. It marks the point halfway between the Winter Solstice and the Vernal Equinox. Anglo/Germanic culture calls this Groundhog Day.

The story goes that if the little critter sees his shadow we have six more weeks of winter, and if he doesn't see his shadow we have an early spring. Anyway, the important point is that this is a form of sun-watching.

Ancient cultures were very interested in predicting the mid-point between the beginning of Winter and of Spring for agricultural and ceremonial reasons.

Frank Cushing, the flamboyant ethnologist with the Smithsonian Institute's Bureau of American Ethnology, lived in Zuni Pueblo for five years in the 1890s. During his long stay with the Zuni he was honored by being made a member of the tribe, and even inducted into the order of the Priesthood of the Bow, which allowed him to observe and record Zuni ceremonies. This included the observations which the sun priest made in order to keep a calendar. One of the most critical days on the calendar was that day in February when the shadows of a natural feature on Corn Mountain and the pillar of the gardens of Zuni lay along the same trail. This indicated it was time to prepare the fields for planting.

The Zuni no longer employ a sun priest, and, like most of us, rely upon multi-national corporate farmers to produce our agricultural products.

I have an informal but highly personal ritual for sun-watching, and recommend that you develop such a routine observation, too. The Vernal Equinox, or first day of Spring, occurs at approximately 8 p.m. on March 20. Observe and celebrate its arrival.

## NAME THAT MOON

What about sister moon during February and March? February is an odd month, inasmuch as it contains no new phase of the moon. New moon occurs on January 31, March 1 and March 31, and the moon is at full phase on February 15 and March 17. I love to observe the moon a couple of days after new phase, when it appears as a thin

crescent in the evening sky after sunset. With the aid of a telescope, this experience can be very rewarding.

I highly recommend that you purchase Antonin Rukl's *Atlas of the Moon*, Kalmbach Publishing Co., Waukesha, Wisconsin, which also publishes *Astronomy Magazine*. This book is a complete reference on the moon and includes detailed maps.

Now we just need to work on a name for our moon. Out of the eight planets in our solar system with their own moon, our moon is the only one that has not received either a name or a numerical designation. I know there is bound to be many designations better for our natural satellite than just the generic "moon."

As a matter of fact, a friend of mine was out "surfing" the Internet and saw a list of names for our moon, but as of yet they are not in my possession, and they remain unknown to me. So if you have some thoughts on this subject, drop them into my voice mail box at 512-756-5500. Maybe we can come up with a more poetic designation.

## FOLLOW THAT STAR

The planet Mars is still making quite a spectacle of itself. Well-placed in the evening sky for February and March, our solar system neighbor is relatively

close and large. Small optics can reveal some surface detail, but larger telescopes will reveal much more. Venus and Jupiter shine brightly at dawn, but Saturn, Uranus and Neptune will wait awhile to show off.

Have you been tracking the progress that the constellation Orion has been making since Fall? Since this constellation lies on the "celestial equator," Orion's behavior makes an interesting study of how star patterns—or constellations—seem to "rise" progressively earlier each evening. In the early fall, Orion "rises" above the eastern horizon at midnight, but now it is well above the eastern horizon after sunset. This progressively earlier "rising" will continue on into Spring.

The Big Dipper—or Ursa Major, the Great Bear—seems to revolve around the Pole Star as the year progresses. The stars Dubhe (The Bear) and Merak (The Lion) are known as the pointers, as a line taken through them points at the Pole Star Polaris. The Navajo refer to the grouping of stars we call Ursa Major as Revolving Male.

Revolving Male is one of the calendrical star groups the



Navajo used to indicate the season. When he slants down to the east it is Winter; when he is overhead it is Spring. When he is parallel to the western horizon in the early evening it is time to plant.

Don't use him as an indicator to plant crops here in Central Texas, because in May/June your neighbors will be ahead of you in harvesting their early veggies. Spring planting comes far later to the higher, much cooler elevations of the Four Corners region of the Southwest.

Celestial calendrical indicators must be "calibrated" to your own local climate. That means you need to get outside and observe. The story in the sky is more interesting and far less depressing than the nightly blues on the one-eyed culture erradicator.

**Now we just need to work on a name for our moon. Out of the eight planets in our solar system with their own moon, our moon is the only one that has not received either a name or a numerical designation.**

Look for the Constellation Leo Major, the Great Lion, rising in the east on late Winter and early Spring evenings. The famous sickle shape of stars forms the lion's head and mane. Regulus, a bright yellow star, lies at the base of the sickle of Leo.

Far from the brightest star in the sky (21st in order of brightness), Regulus has been frequently associated in ancient cultures with the concept of royal power. Regulus is the diminutive form of the Latin "rex," or "king," a name given to the star by Copernicus. A right triangle of stars forms the posterior of the lion. Denebola, which designates the lion's tail, is the brightest star of this group.

The Constellation Leo makes its appearance in the sky on late winter evenings and stays with us until early summer. It contains many galaxies that are the frequent target of many amateur astronomers.

What about meteors? February and March are notably lacking any major showers. The big show for meteors is in July and August. Although the brightest meteor I have ever seen was in early November on my ranch in the Christmas Mountains near Terlingua, Texas. I didn't believe that it was part of a known shower and therefore is termed "sporadic." It was brighter than the planet Venus at its brightest. The ancient Greeks called them Bolides, which means "thrown spear." This was quite a spear, which culminated in a fiery fragmented explosion at the end of its travel through the earth's atmosphere.

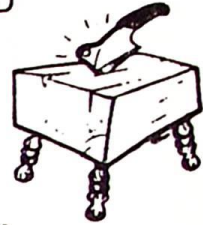
The moral of that story is that on any clear, dark night away from man-made light you can see some meteors. If you want to read further on meteor showers, I suggest a book by that title by Gary W. Kronk.

Remember, the sky is just outside every night, so go out and behold the spectacle.

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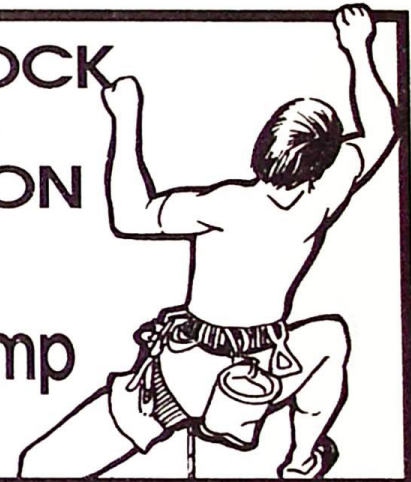
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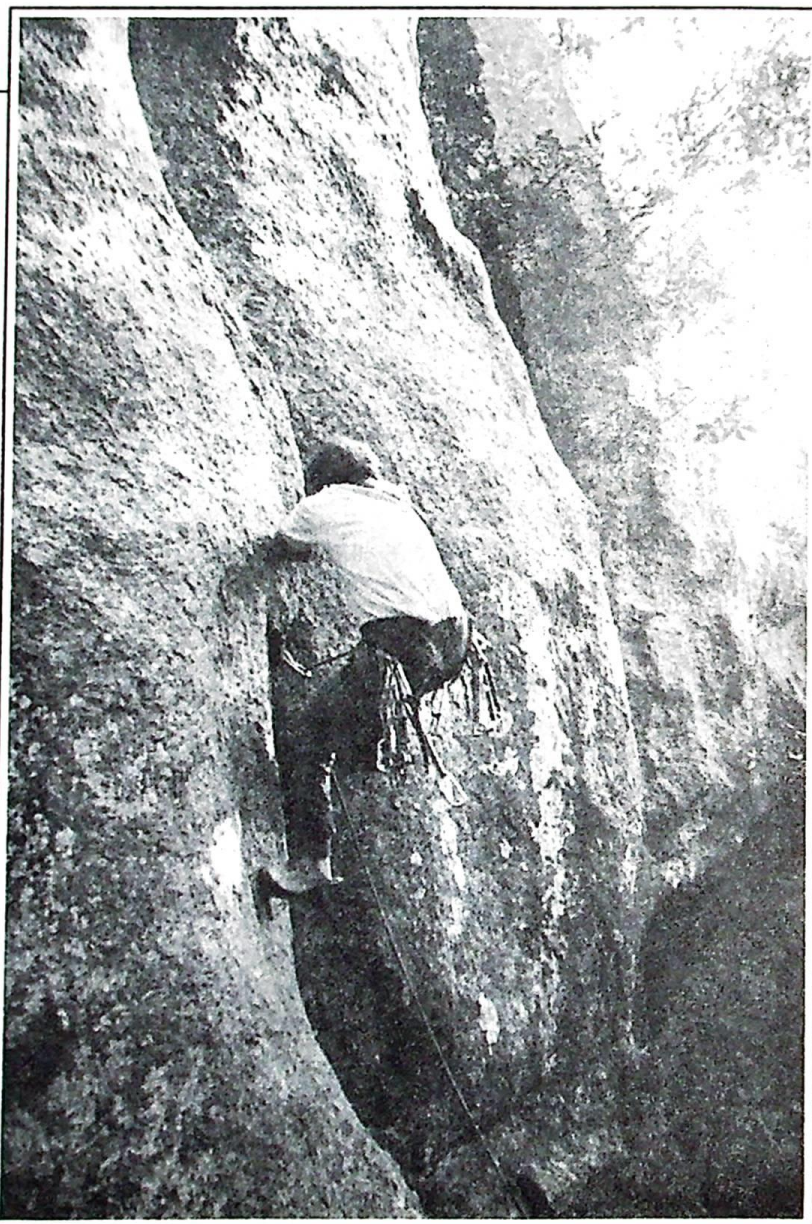
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# A DAY OF ADVENTURE CLIMBING AT ENCHANTED ROCK

**A**dventure climbing at Enchanted Rock has always been an exciting experience. Many routes remain in the bold style by which they were first climbed. Bolts in slabs were drilled on lead and placed far apart. Cracks are still led on natural gear which is removed after the climbers are finished. Many of the earlier routes were pioneered using the climbing styles found in the mountains. Rock climbing comes from techniques used by mountaineers to climb the steep rock faces and cracks to reach the top of a mountain. Cracks were considered the gateway to the mountains.

Although Enchanted Rock does not have the towering walls or the long continuous crack systems found in the multi-pitch routes of the high mountains, the style of traditional and adventure climbing prevails throughout the park. One can feel the solitude and wildness of the land plus experience the drive and satisfaction that climbing adventurers have to search out unknown routes on the rock.

Typically a climbing day starts out early because of the longer time commitment to hike out to the vari-



BARRY WILSON LEADING OVER THE CHALLENGING SECTION ON MIDDLE CRACK IN THE TRIPLE CRACKS AREA. PHOTO BY THE AUTHOR.

ous rock locations and get set up to climb. Both partners are loaded down with ropes, metal climbing gear, water, food for the day and extra clothing. Being prepared for a change in the weather or the strong sunshine is part of it.

I spent a beautiful December day climbing with my long term friend and experienced wilderness climber, Barry Wilson. We met at 8:00 a.m. at the ranger's station to formulate our plans. It was sprinkling rain so we opted to visit the Fredericksburg bakery to give the weather time to clear. After a round of coffee and delicious German pastries we returned to the park full of energy to attack the strenuous crack climbs.

We decided on the Triple Crack area because of the excellent grouping of lengthy, quality cracks. Located in a large secluded granite sanctuary, these three cracks are some of the most classic and beauti-

*The first part of the route has a steep awkward lie-back that spits many new leaders off the rock.*

*You have to push with your feet and pull with your hands in a seemly unnatural manner to gain a good stance above this large rock lip.*

ful routes of their grade found in the park. They are much like the cracks found in the mountains except that they only go up about 100 feet instead of the hundreds of feet of continual climbing that you experience on taller multi-pitch rock.

We started on the classic favorite named Owl Crack with its steep hand and toe jams. This double crack system is found in an obvious rock dihedral to the far

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right of the Triple Crack area. Great care should be taken as you begin this climb because rare subtropical ferns grow at the base of the rock. As Barry began to lead the route he systematically jammed his hand and toes into the space in the crack between the rock and torqued them in a manner to anchor his arms and legs into the crack long enough to work his way up the route. It sounds messy and hard but it is really beautiful and compelling. Along with the pain comes

CONTINUED ON FOLLOWING PAGE



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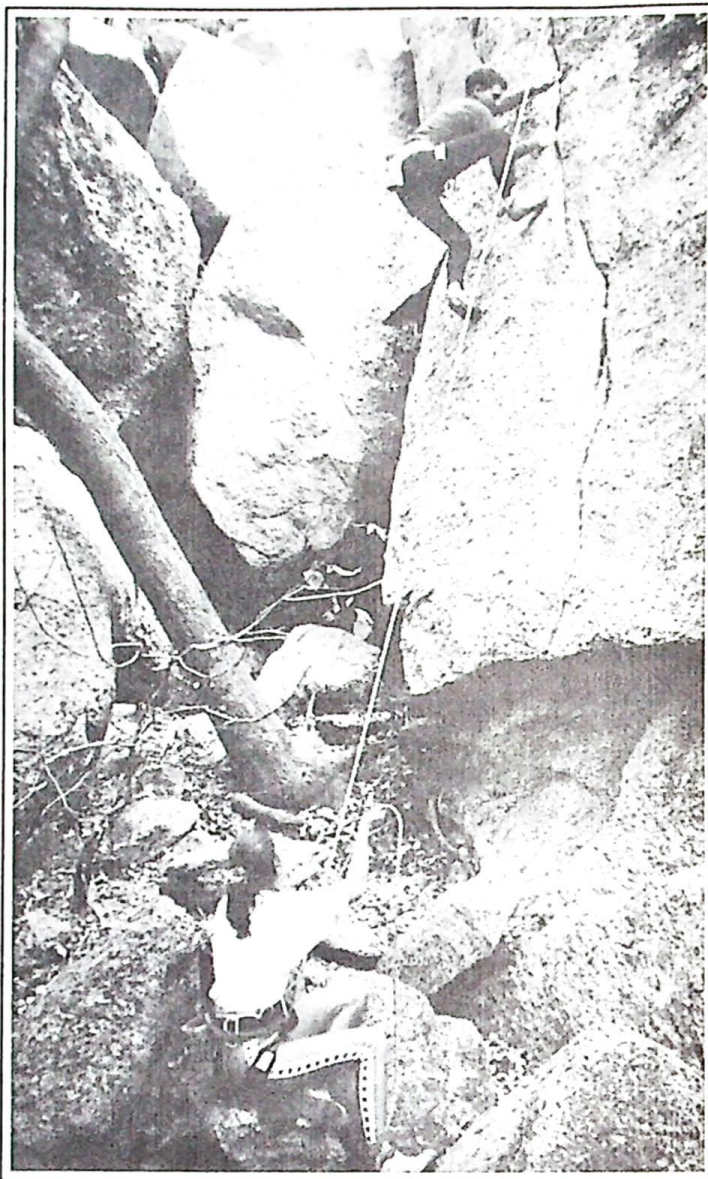
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## ADVENTURE CLIMBING

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 21



VISITING CLIMBERS FROM NORTH CAROLINA TOP ROPING GRASS CRACK IN THE TRIPLE CRACKS AREA. PHOTO BY THE AUTHOR

reinforced determination to conquer the climb.

After making the exciting moves over the rock roof and climbing on the thin flakes to the top of the route, Barry found himself over 100 feet off the ground. Part of the reward is to sit in the rock alcove of the belay and look out over the beautiful granite landscape. At that point, the wonder and beauty of Enchanted Rock fills your soul.

My job was to climb up as the second person removing the natural protection pieces that Barry had placed as the leader and leaving the route clean of climbing gear. Next I was expected to continue to climb past Barry while still tied into the rope and on belay to the rappel anchors located to the far left. As I made my way traversing left across the rock I thought

how awful it would be to make a mistake and fall causing a long pendulum swing against the rough granite crystals.

The second route we climbed is called Middle Crack which is between Owl land Becky's Crack. The first person to discover a new route and climb it successfully can name the route since they did the

*Leading this route can throw the climber off balance and cause the leader to fall because of its awkward nature.*

first ascent. Middle Crack is the obvious crack in the center of the three cracks. The first part of the route has a steep awkward lie-back that splits many new leaders off the rock. You have to push with your feet and pull with your hands in a seemly unnatural manner to gain a good stance above this large rock lip. Barry remembered how easy it was to fall at this critical point. Of course, thirteen years of climbing

CONTINUED ON PAGE 42

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# THE EAGLES OF LAKE BUCHANAN

**A** colony of between 12 and 30 eagles spend the cold months fishing, hunting and keeping eagle eyes from upon the cathedral cliffs where they seek sanctuary. Today the Colorado's waters are impeded by a chain of dams, that form the Highland Lakes. Running upstream from Longhorn Dam in East Austin to the wild and remote headwaters of Lake Buchanan some miles below the community of Bend.

Bald eagles have been viewed fishing occasionally throughout this region and have even been reported across from the office buildings on Lake Austin, next to Tom Miller dam.

Although eagles have always called the Colorado country home, there was a short period of one hundred and fifty or so years when the eagles took on the added burden of serving as targets. Rifles and shotguns boomed and traps bore down on eagle flesh. Ranchers and lake people's guns cleared the skies of eagles over where sheep and goats roam.

Back in the fifties, around Tow, ranchers and lake people recognized several breeds of eagles. All were considered marauders and were shot on sight. First recognized was the American Eagle with the white head and tail, huge golden beak and golden naked feet and dark body; secondly they recognized the Mexican Eagle. Slightly larger, with mottled plumage of browns, a darker beak, and naked feet. Then, some say, there was the Black Eagle. Darker than either of the other two, but just as big.

Today bird folks still report the three types of eagles, but they are recognized as different stages of maturity of the very same bird, the Bald Eagle. People observe these eagles from vantage points around Lake Buchanan or from upon its waters. Eagles are seen from Stone Point to Morgan Creek and on up to Garrett Island then to Willow Slough and Cedar Point and still on up the narrowing lake until it peters out.

Kayaks and canoes can drift down from the Colorado Bend State Park through the heart and soul of eagle country

---

by **CHARLES TISCHLER**





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The fact that bald eagles colonize Lake Buchanan in the winter indicates a healthy environment. Bald eagle habitat requires productive waters, a diverse ecosystem... a remnant of a Vanishing Texas.

Weaving these eagles into the cultural fabric of Texas has been an ongoing adventure with exhilarating moments coupled with times of despair. Until 1981 very few people knew there were eagles haunting the region. Then

after two years of behind the scenes work, the Fredericksburg *Radio Post* ran a piece announcing a PM Magazine episode on KTBC television in Austin featuring the eagle's story. There was coverage in the *Austin American Statesman*, *Austin Magazine*, and the *Highlander* in Marble Falls.

In 1982 Ed Low and Shawn DeVaney started the Vanishing Texas River Cruise. I swapped free trips up the river for press coverage of their operation. More writers and photographers were drawn to the cruise. Austin's KVUE 24 dispatched SkyCam. Then, in the early winter of 1983, a CBS News crew headed by International Correspondent Martha Teischner produced a three-minute piece that ran on the CBS Evening News, with Dan Rather doing the lead-in. That story ponged through the CBS News system: Late Night, Early Morning, In the News on Saturday morning for the kids. The piece even ran on American Airlines news presentations on certain flights. Then after more and more coverage people became shocked if you hadn't heard of the eagles on Buchanan.

The 1995 official mid-winter bald eagle count on Lake Buchanan logged six immature eagles and three adults.

CONTINUED ON FOLLOWING PAGE.

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## LAKE BUCHANAN EAGLES

CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE.

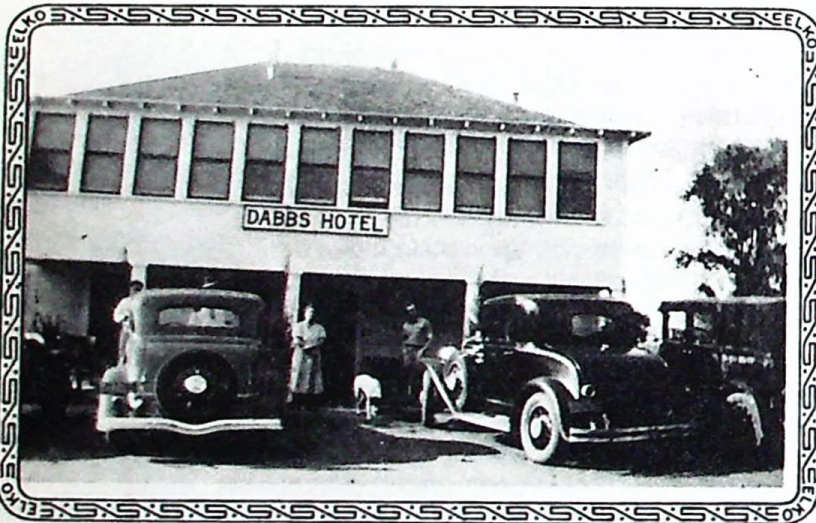
This total of nine eagles registered a new low on the official mid-winter census. Previously the counts have ranged from 10 to 34. But, how many eagles winter on this the first of the highland lakes? Well, as the counts indicate, it varies.

Old eagle watchers in the area expected a count of 14 for the '95 count, not nine. What happened? The only grasping answer is that they were somewhere else on that day. The operators of the Vanishing Texas River Cruise had been regularly seeing more and were disappointed. Maybe next winter it will be colder and the count higher.

I have been participating in the official Lake Buchanan mid-winter bald eagle count since 1984. And, I have been dealing with and for the eagles since January 7, 1979, sixteen years to the day before the 1995 official count.

The world continues to hear of these eagles. Talks have been give to civic and school groups. In 1989 I traveled to Mexico City and addressed over 500 people at the Maria Isabel Sheraton Hotel. There I shared my latter day discovery. The Mexican Eagle, as it is portrayed today on the official Seal of the Country is in fact our immature Bald Eagle. The ranchers and the eagle shooters back on the lake had been right... only it was the same eagle. Through more

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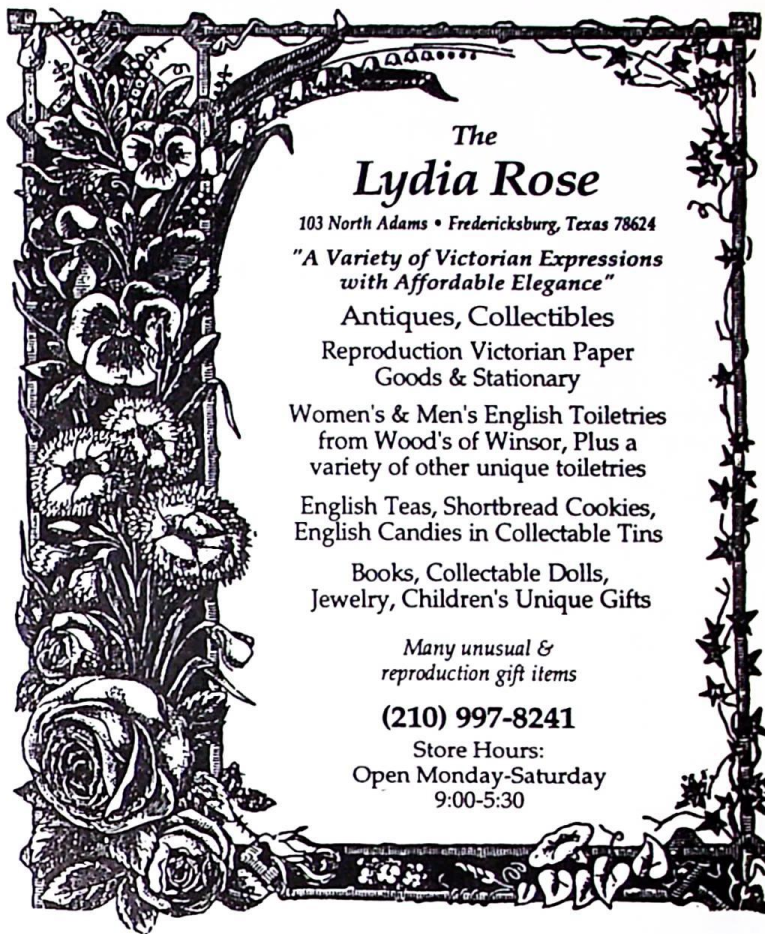
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*On the ground, in the valley of Mexico, I learned that as late as two years before my visit a fully mature bald eagle was sighted at the remnants of Lake Texcoco only 50 minutes by car from one of the largest and most polluted cities on earth.*

research I learned that the Aztec Legend of the establishment of Tenochtitlan, later Mexico City, about the vision of an eagle on a cactus on an island on a lake with a serpent in its beak was not merely a mystic vision. I feel the vision is based upon an absolute knowledge of the bird and its environment. The original Aztec renderings left no doubt.

On the ground, in the valley of Mexico, I learned that as late as two years before my visit a fully mature bald eagle was sighted at the remnants of Lake Texcoco only 50 minutes by car from one of the largest and most polluted cities on earth. I pray for the restoration of historic Lake Texcoco—the very sight of the Aztec legend.

SEE LAKE BUCHANAN EAGLES, PAGE 44



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# THE '88 EAGLE COUNT

**A**t Thunderbird Lodge on the northeast shore of Lake Buchanan an intermittent procession of headlights interrupted the starless predawn darkness. Thick-clad figures emerged from cars and vans. Huddled in small groups they wove introductions and instructions into an ongoing commentary on the bone-chilling weather.

They were gathering for the third annual Lake Buchanan bald eagle winter count. There was a TV crew, writers, photographers and the eagle counters, all under the cooperative leadership of the Highland Lakes Birding Society, Vanishing Texas River Cruise and the Buchanan Bass Busters.

I arrived with Robbie Locklier of Marble Falls at the appointed time. We were well equipped with cameras, film, and several layers of clothing. I had a hot thermos of coffee, Robbie brought a package of cinnamon rolls. We were ready.

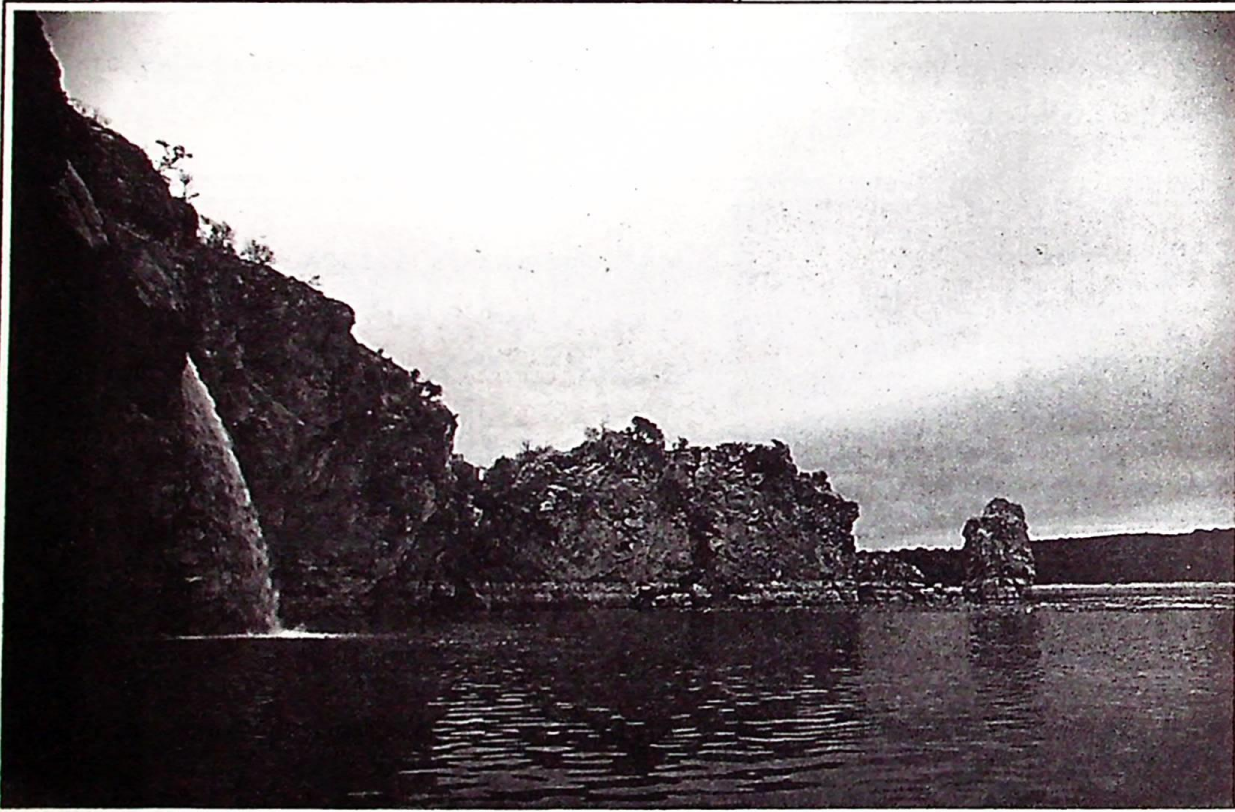
Sgt. Roy Whitten, a Ranger for the Lower Colorado River Authority, was our guide. Roy was an amiable ol'

boy who knew well the lake and his boat and shared the excitement of the event. We cast off and followed two other boats as the sun tried to burn an orange glow in the eastern horizon. At other points around the lake more boats were launched as part of an effort that included over 40 dedicated souls.

We were headed up-lake on the Colorado River past Tow to Lemmon's Camp and back. The ride was ice-cold

from the beginning. We hunkered down for shelter behind the windshield of the open boat as we gathered speed.

Suddenly, at the Willows near Council Creek we spotted our first eagle perched in the uppermost branches of a barren tree. Before we could get anywhere near the bird it lit out over open water.



FALLS CREEK MEETS LAKE BUCHANAN.  
PHOTO BY CHARLES TISCHLER

by Ira Kennedy

*I'd been cold before but nothing compared to that return trip. It was a mad-dash by desperate men trying to reach shore before blood froze in their veins. The boat skipped, or pounded, like a stone across the icy lake.*

I took advantage of the moment of stillness and poured a half cup of coffee. A wave hit the hull and the brew splashed out of the cup, ice cold. I tossed away what little was left. I checked the cinnamon rolls—they were frozen.

We didn't have much time for snacks anyway. There were eagles aplenty. By the time we were offshore from greater Tow our boat had counted over six of the big birds. Eagle expert Charles Tischler had predicted a high count due to the hard winter further north which would push the birds, not of common sense and comfort, south. To Tischler's everlasting credit he was the first to bring public attention to the bald eagles on Lake Buchanan. He is an authority on the birds, as well as one of the most ardent admirers.

Tischler's prediction was coming to pass. Last year seven mature and 10 immature birds were recorded. We had already seen more than I expected and we had yet to reach their prime roosting habitat. This year's count was to more than double last year's.

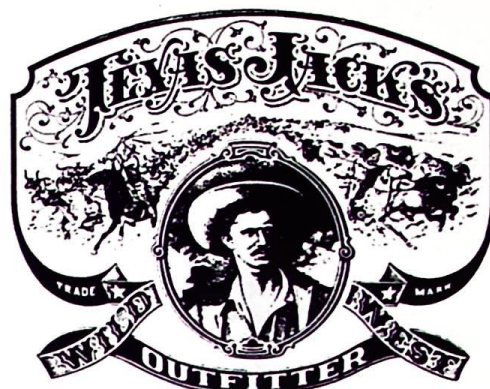
The immature bald eagles are a mottled brown. At maturity they develop the distinctive white head and tail feathers. A mature eagle is approximately three feet long with a wingspan pushing seven feet.

As we passed the Falls we spotted five eagles circling high in the distance. One, a mature bald eagle, climbed skyward as its white plumage reflected the sunlight like a signal mirror. I understood then, more clearly than ever before, why the Indians selected this bird to carry their prayers to the Creator. I also understood why, its predatory reputation aside, this bird is our national symbol. Among all God's critters, the bald eagle looks up to none.

Throughout the trip the eagles remained suspicious, cautious and aloof. Faintly at first, above the next bend, five more soaring eagles were spotted. As we neared Lemmon's Camp our count had already exceeded last year's. Ahead, the two lead boats sat till in the water, their occupants pointing excitedly toward the summit of the western shoreline.

"Look," someone from another boat shouted, "up there!"

CONTINUED ON FOLLOWING PAGE.



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*Again we hunkered down low in the boat away from the wind. I poked my head up once for some unimaginable reason. At that moment the wind seemed to change from a gaseous to a solid state as it hit me full-face. I was too stiff to shiver.*

We counted 10 in a stand of barren trees along the ridge line. That brought our count to 30.

The official count was being kept by others under the supervision of the Highland Lakes Birding Society. Those boats maintained sufficient speed to virtually eliminate the possibility of duplicate sightings by a single boat. Times, locations and flight directions of each sighting were mapped. These statistics helped, too, to eliminate duplicate sightings between sectors.

We arrived at the northern boundary of the count as the other boats turned and headed back, jubilant, to report their sightings. We continued upstream. After a few hundred yards we were nearly upon another immature eagle before it drew our attention. We went still further upstream, saw nothing and agreed to turn back.

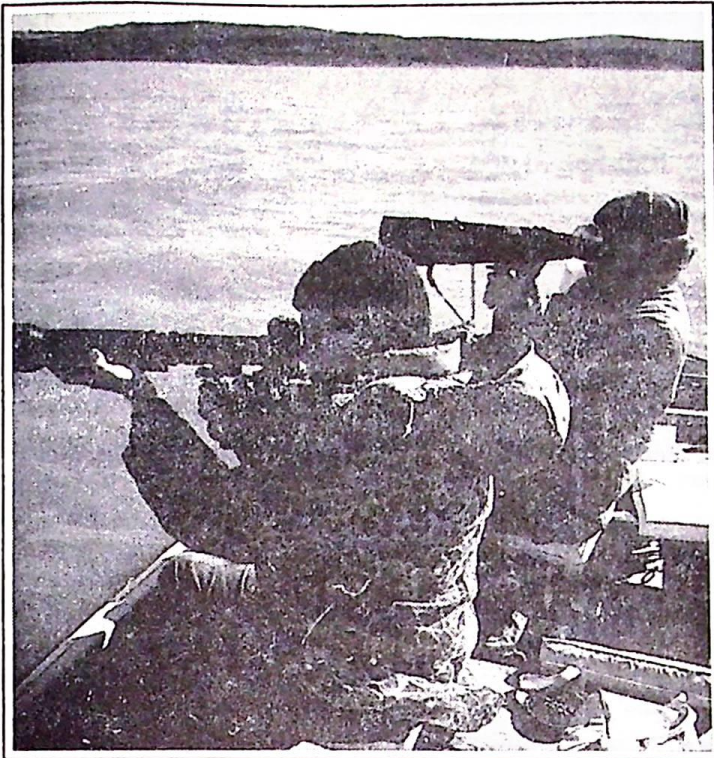
I'd been cold before but nothing compared to that return trip. It was a mad-dash by desperate men trying to reach shore before blood froze in their veins. The boat skipped, or pounded, like a stone across the icy lake. Again we hunkered down low in the boat away from the wind. I poked my head up once for some unimaginable reason. At that moment the wind seemed to change from a gaseous to a solid state as it hit me full-face. I was too stiff to shiver.

After what seemed like two eternities we were on shore stomping circulation back into our feet. In the car Robbie and I turned the heater up full-blast and headed to the communal breakfast at Buchanan Dam.

Inside the LCRA administrative building a warm fireplace crackled; the conversations were loud and exuberant. The crowd was diverse—from teenagers to retired folks. Susan Steward, a biology teacher from Burnet High School was there with seven of her students. Three of them BHS juniors Wendy Sanfer, B.J. Hartsell and Chana Jones, were second-year veterans of the winter count.

"Last year we didn't see any eagles," B.J. said. "This year we saw one that come so close you could almost touch it."

Sandyland Catering had prepared breakfast tacos, hot coffee and soft cinnamon rolls. Standing in the foodline, I



PHOTOGRAPHERS AT THE READY, AND WAITING, FOR THE COVETED EAGLE PHOTOS. PHOTO, CHARLES TISCHLER.

Sandyland Catering had prepared breakfast tacos, hot coffee and soft cinnamon rolls. Standing in the foodline, I saw the steaming tortillas and asked for some to stuff in my boots, wrap around my toes, etc. I was almost taken seriously.

At breakfast I sat across from Keith Ackley, one of the Highland Lakes most avid birders. We talked about the eagles and the hundreds of other birds we spotted. There were over a dozen species including the Western Grebe. Coincidentally, this is the first winter the Grebe has been spotted in the Highland Lakes. Its traditional wintering habitat is the northwestern Pacific Coast.

Breakfast was over as the count was officially completed. A record number of 35 eagles were spotted—seven mature and 28 immature. More than twice last year's count.

The television camera lights came on and newspaper reporters clustered around "news sources."

"It was very cold this morning," Tischler said holding forth to a group of reporters while adding new meaning to the term "understatement." "As we approached," Tischler continued, "the eagles woke up and began circling. They weren't in the aggressive feeding mode moving across the lake actively hunting. They were very close to where they spent the night..."

"So what's your reaction? What you think?" another reporter asked Tischler.

"It's fantastic. Wonderful. Whoopie!"

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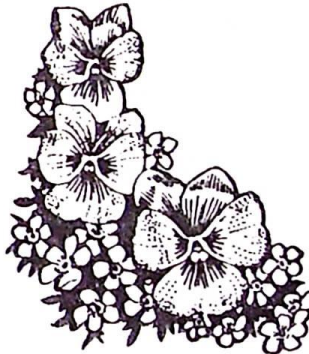
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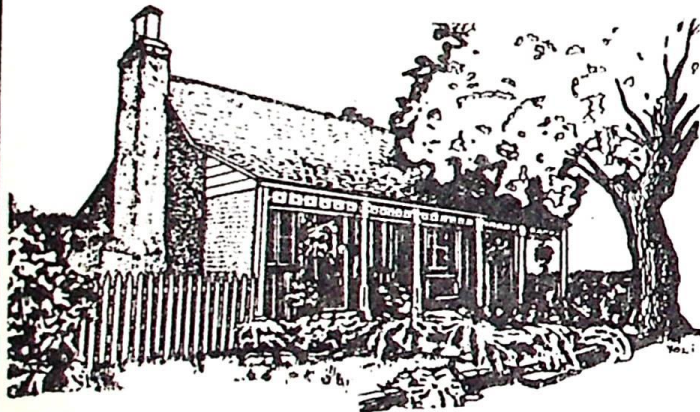
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# Colorado Bend State Park

Colorado Bend State Park is located in Lampasas and San Saba Counties on the Colorado River, about 10 miles above Lake Buchanan, near the community of Bend.

Bend is north of Llano via State Highway 16 or west of Lampasas via U.S. Highway 183/190. Paved access to Bend via R.R.s 501, 580 or 581. From Bend there approximately 4 miles of unpaved road to the park entrance.

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## Gorman Falls Tour

Every Saturday and Sunday. Caravan from park headquarters to the Gorman area of the park and then hike to below the falls. From trail head, it's a one and one-half mile round-trip over beautiful hill country terrain. Substantial footwear with rubber soles is recommended. No pets allowed on tour. No restrooms or drinking water available in Gorman Falls area. 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. Saturdays and 10 a.m. on Sundays weather permitting, \$2 per adult, \$1 for children 6 through 12 years old, under 6 years old free, activity fee may apply and entrance fee for non-TCP holders, guides B. Paddie and J. Taylor, 915-628-3240.

## Wildlife Viewing

Wildlife viewing at baited area, predawn to noon or until dusk if others not waiting to use the blinds, additional fee, reservations available but not required, limited number of blinds make it necessary to only accept reservations in person at park headquarters. \$2 per person activity fee. With Conservation Passport only.



## Longhorn Cavern State Park

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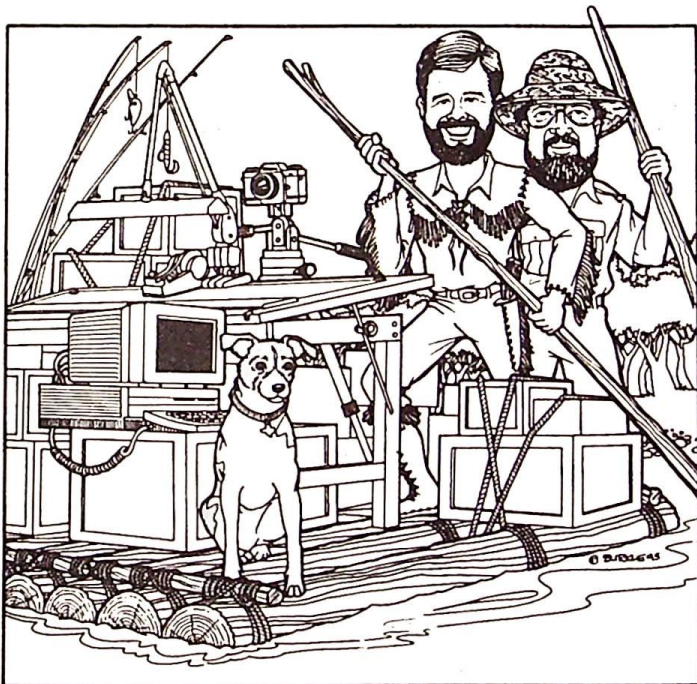
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## WELCOME ABOARD!



BUD, BUCK & CHARLES RAFTING THEIR WAY INTO THE HILL COUNTRY.  
ILLUSTRATION BY BUCK BURKLE.

This issue introduces two new staff members, Buck Burkle, Art Director, and Charles Tischler, Editor-at-Large. Apart from the illustration above, Buck's work (which you'll be seeing more of) can be seen on page 24 along with Charles's eagle story. Buck's dog, Bud, is sure to get an assignment and a title if he keeps hanging around during staff meetings. IK

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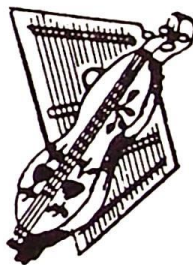
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## PIONEER OUTPOSTS

PART ONE OF THREE PARTS

# FORT MASON

With the arrival of settlers in Indian territory north and west of San Antonio in the 1850s, it became necessary for the U.S. Army to establish forts in the region for protection from Indian hostilities and to encourage the development of this new frontier.

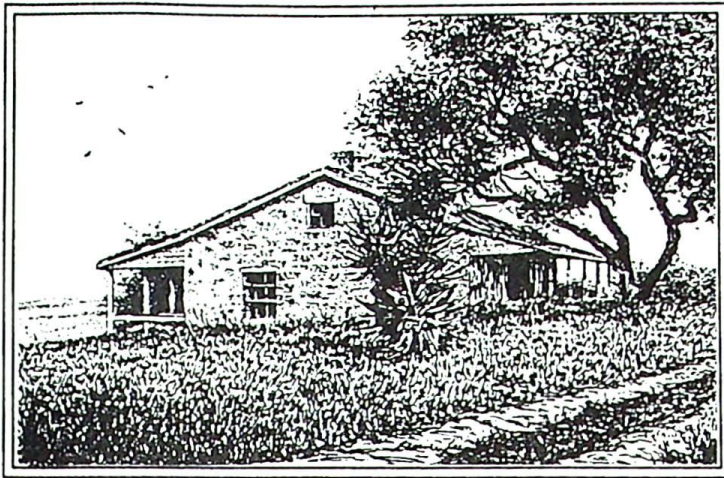
And so, in 1851 Major William J. Hardee left Fort Martin Scott near Fredericksburg with about 200 soldiers from six companies of the 2nd Dragoons in search of a suitable site for the new outpost. They came upon a hill 110 miles from San Antonio that caught the fancy of a Bvt. Major H. W. Merrill, who recommended they locate the fort there. Not only did the site lay on the well-traveled Pinta Trail, commanding panoramic views of the countryside, it also provided a constant water source.

They established the fort at this 1,100-acre site on July 6, 1851 and named it Fort Mason. It is thought that it was so named in honor of 2nd Lt. George T. Mason, who was killed in a skirmish near Brownsville, a skirmish that reputedly led to the Mexican War.

Merrill and his men, with the help of a group of civilians, completed the installation in two years, constructing its buildings with logs, mortar and blocks of red sandstone which they chiseled from rocks transported from nearby Post Hill. Its facilities could accommodate two companies of troops and a regiment of soldiers.

Calling the Indian leaders forth, he told them he could kill a dog and then bring it back to life. He then chloroformed the hapless animal and cut off small pieces of its tail to prove that it was indeed dead. Shortly thereafter, when the effects of the chloroform wore off, the "dead" dog "came to life" again.

Until it was officially abandoned on March 23, 1869, Fort Mason knew alternating periods of occupation: 1851-1854; 1858-1859; February, 1859-March, 1861; and 1866-1869. During the Civil War, the Confederate States Army used it as headquarters for both the 2nd and the 4th Cavalry, and as a prison camp for Union sympathizers. Eighteen generals of the Civil War served here at one time or another, including such famous men as Robert E. Lee,



FORT MASON. DRAWING BY LAVERNE LEE. REPRINTED WITH PERMISSION.

Albert Sidney Johnston, John B. Hood and Fitzhugh Lee. Gen. Robert E. Lee was commanding officer of the fort on two occasions.

In addition, Cpt. Charles Travis, the only son of Alamo hero William Barrett Travis, served with the 2nd Cavalry here. Charles was only seven years old when his father died at the Alamo. He later served in both the Texas Rangers and the state legislature.

An interesting story emerging from the days of Fort Mason involves the fort's second commanding officer. The tale goes that in 1851 Lt. Col. Charles Mays, in an effort to win respect from the local Indian chiefs, tricked them into believing he had magical powers. Calling the Indian leaders forth, he told them he could kill a dog and then bring it back to life. He then chloroformed the hapless animal and cut off small pieces of its tail to prove that it was indeed dead. Shortly thereafter, when the effects of the chloroform wore off, the "dead" dog "came to life" again. The white man did indeed possess strong medicine and was not to be taken lightly!

When Confederate soldiers began returning to Fort Mason from the Civil War in 1866, they found the buildings in ruins, set afire earlier by Union troops. The men of the 4th Cavalry made a tentative effort to rebuild the ruins, but were transferred elsewhere in 1867 and never completed the project. The army officially abandoned the fort two years later in 1869.

According to a brochure from the Mason County Historical Society, "The sandstone fort structures which had once provided security for Mason citizens were dismantled and used to construct local buildings. As Fort Mason disappeared, permanent masonry buildings in the City of Mason began to take shape." It is thought that only one original structure from the fort escaped destruction and remains today. This is the cavalry stable located at the corner of Post Hill and Bryan streets in Mason. In 1876, the late Kurt Zesch directed the reconstruction of the officers quarters which occupies the fort site today.

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# THE STORYTELLERS

BY IRA KENNEDY

**F**rom a rock shelter halfway up the north face of the bald granite mountain the old Kiowa saw them as they rode in from the northwest. He determined they were four loud and careless young Comanche warriors. He had observed them for the better part of a day as they followed the Pinta Trail to a landmark called Cerro de Santiago, Hill of the Sacred One.

The old man was a Kiowa-Apache shaman and he knew better than to disturb Gahe, the mountain spirit, without great cause. Yet the young Comanches with their horses and their wild nature approached the sacred spot mindless and ignorant of the consequences.

They dismounted in a sheltered place at the foot of the enchanted rock. The shaman watched them build a fire in the draw sheltered by great liveoaks. It was a sacred spot to be visited only at special times during the year or at important moments during a lifetime. The shaman wondered what kind of men these Comanches had become.

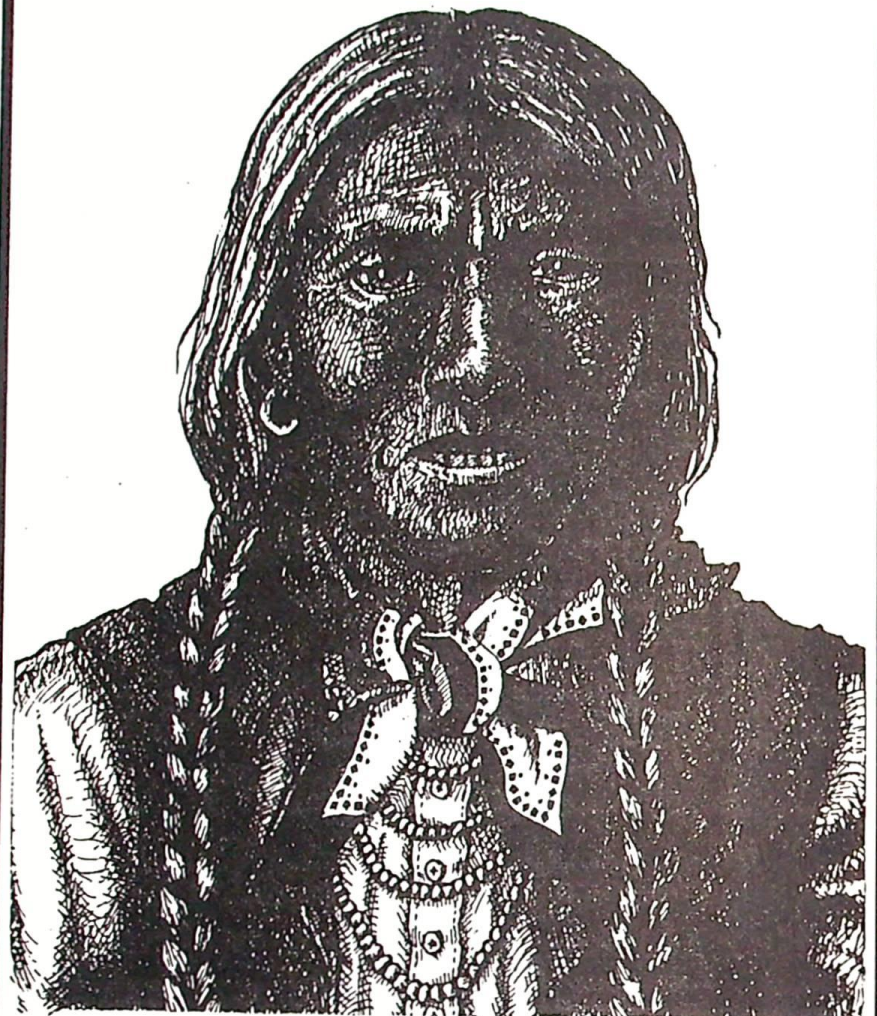
They were, as he had learned earlier, loud and careless. What he did next was, due to those obnoxious traits, exceedingly easy. He approached and sat down beside their campfire unnoticed until he spoke.

"You are on sacred ground, my friends, what brings you here?"

The four young Comanches were stunned into silence. It was easy to see he was Kiowa, but to which band he belonged they could not say. It was plain, however, that he was a holy man—a man of power. The old man repeated his question again, and while he spoke he followed his words in signs.

The Comanches explained that they were seeking The Great River to the south and they asked how many days ride it might be. They apologized for trespassing on sacred ground, but went on to explain that they had observed the spectacular pink and black

CONTINUED ON PAGE 38



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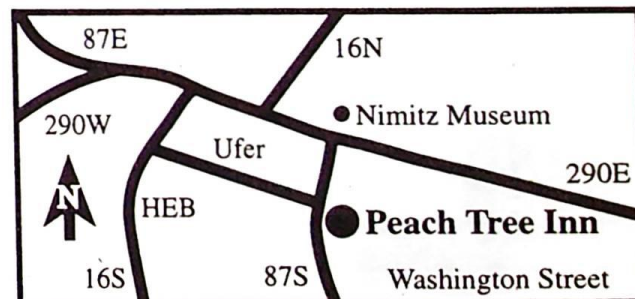
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## THE STORYTELLERS

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 39

mountain from a great distance and their curiosity brought them.

"The Great River is not far," the shaman said, "for a Comanche horse." The old man knew the Comanches were superb riders and they commanded equally fine horses. But he had little respect for the men he saw before him. He knew they were not Penataka Comanche, but instead belonged to a more remote band. He did not know much about these Comanches and he did not like them.

"The old man is wise," the youngest of the four said, "but tell me this," he continued, "is it far for a Comanche horse and a Comanche?"

"Hardly any distance at all," the shaman said, "but without a horse only the Kiowa are fit for the journey."

"The old man is brave" the spokesman for the four said, "and a shaman as well."

"I am here as a neighbor to a neighbor, and I come in peace. I come to you as a human with many friends."

"Then join us," The Comanche said. "Honor us with an understanding of this holy mountain."

So be it," the old man replied, "you ask about the Gahe of the enchanted rock. You want to know what Gahe knows. To do so you must listen to the moun-

**YOU ASK ABOUT THE GAHE OF THE ENCHANTED ROCK. YOU WANT TO KNOW WHAT GAHE KNOWS. TO DO SO YOU MUST LISTEN TO THE MOUNTAIN SPIRIT AND NOT TO MEN. WHAT YOU HEAR FROM MEN ARE STORIES, AND WHAT YOU LEARN FROM THE MOUNTAIN IS SACRED. STORIES CAN BE LOST BUT GAHE LIVES FOREVER IN THE MOUNTAINS CAVES.**

tain spirit and not to men. What you hear from men are stories, and what you learn from the mountain is sacred. Stories can be lost but Gahe lives forever in the mountain's caves. I will tell you what Gahe has told me—not everything, but what I am permitted by conscience to say."

The young men listened to the old Kiowa, but their impatience was apparent.

He began by telling them about the past while his shadow mimed his words on the massive granite boulders behind the campfire. He described a giant beast two trees tall that grazed on the highest branches. The storyteller spoke of how the mammoths were hunted with spears made of two shafts. The shadow of hands and arms illustrated perfectly

the principal of the atlatl, or spear thrower.

"One shaft was tipped with a flint point," he said, "which was thrown from close range. With the hunter on foot the thrust had to be swift and certain." And his shadow hurled an imaginary spear deep into the night.

"Nonsense," the principal Comanche interrupted. "Surely they possessed greater weapons. Hunting like that is for crazies."

The others laughed and shook their heads in disbelief.

"At least they must have had this," another said holding his bow high. "A simple stick and string."

The young audience agreed that the speaker knew little about the past.

"What use is the past," the spokesman asked, "if it can't make this?" He held aloft his new rifle. That was what mattered. That was magic.

The old man and his stories were madness. They all agreed on that. All his talk of the past was a waste of time.

"With this," the young Comanche continued, "we can hunt buffalo the same as the white man. And once the buffalo are gone there is always the cattle, and the farms."

"The whites," the old shaman said, "will sweep us away like a bed of leaves." His right arm swung wide and fierce in the firelight. He could still feel, now and again, the old powers.

Rising from his place by the fire the rifle's owner confronted the old man. "With more new weapons the whites will never stop us. More white farmers mean more white farms to raid!" With that the young man returned to his place beside the fire satisfied that his point was well made. His companions, meanwhile, were laughing at the foolish old man.

"There are more whites than you can dream," the shaman said. Their laughter struck hard against this pride. He turned away and disappeared into the night.

"Well, Uncle Ira," Jason asked, "Is that it? He disappeared into the night?"

"That's it," I said to my 12-year-old companion.

"I don't know," he replied after tossing another piece of mesquite on the campfire. "I mean, didn't something happen like the one with the rifle gets mad and shoots the medicine man? Or the medicine man goes out and puts a spell on the young brave?"

"I suppose you can finish it any way you want."

"I want to know what really happened," Jason insisted.

"He disappeared into the night."

With that he fell silent again, prodding the camp-

SEE THE STORYTELLERS, PAGE 43

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# THEY MIGHT BE GIANTS

*Is there a human being who does not revere his homeland, even though he may not return? In the language of my people... there is a word for land: Eloheh. This same word also means history, culture, and religion. We cannot separate our place on Earth from our lives on the earth nor from our vision nor our meaning as a people...*

—Jimmie Durham (Cherokee)

We come from humble origins. From cosmic dust, to molten rock; from the sea, to the land; from the trees, dispersing like seeds to the wind. Moving through continents, hunting, and gathering we survived. We adapted. In the process our attachment to the natural environment became an innate part of the human spirit. We are all tied to the land; each in our own private way.

Human history is rooted in a need to see, to smell, to hear, to touch our natural surroundings. Even those of us living in urban environments cannot deny there is a yearning to return to this good earth. For there remains in all of us, a wildness no matter who we are.

To serve this need we Americans have a proud heritage in our public parks—from the city to the national level. The idea of setting aside parklands for people was not always the norm. As populations increased, land became a measure of wealth. And those who owned the land formulated the laws.

However in the settlement of this county a few Americans became dreamers and defenders of an idea which began in the summer of 1870. It was then an influential group of Montana men and a five-man cavalry escort from the War Department under the command of Lieutenant G.C. Doane set out for the



## PARK SUPERINTENDENT

Yellowstone. Their task was to survey this wilderness area.

On the last night of their mission they sat around a campfire discussing the incredible natural beauty which defied their maps—for many of them it was the experience of a lifetime. Soon the conversation of the small band of surveyors took an historic turn. The talk moved away from the economic profit this pristine area held to the singular beauty of the region. It was then this handful of idealists dared to forgo the privilege of filing claims in favor of working toward the establishment of a "national park" to be preserved indefinitely and accessible to all.

**Human history is rooted in a need to see, to smell, to hear, to touch our natural surroundings. Even those of us living in urban environments cannot deny there is a yearning to return to this good earth. For there remains in all of us, a wildness no matter who we are.**

"They Might Be Giants," refers to those who have dreamt the dream, and served their dreams with deeds. Such were the men of Yellowstone, and those to come after—John Muir, Theodore Roosevelt, Steven Mather, Horace Albright, Aldo Leopold... and many more.

Within our own ranks at Texas Parks & Wildlife I include our past executive director Charles Travis, our current executive director Andrew Sansom, our former governor Ann Richards who understood the relationship of land to people. And Luis Armendariz, superintendent of Big Bend Ranch State Natural Area, Dee Hisler of Honey Creek, George Zappler in Special op's, Linda Adkins of TPWD print media, Mary Candee in resources protection, Clay Brewer resource manager/region 7—all dreamers and known by their peers as giants.

And beyond these people are the many others who frequent Enchanted Rock SNA and dream the dream. All are Giants. from cosmic dusto to this place we call Enchanted Rock. Giants still walk the earth.

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## ADVENTURE CLIMBING

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 23

*You have to stop and think about what you are doing because the crack pulls you the opposite direction of your natural balance point.*

assisted him in making the right judgments to move over this challenging section.

The last crack in the trio is Becky's Crack named for the famous mountaineer, Fred Becky who climbed at Enchanted Rock while he was in Central Texas. It is the widest crack of the three and tends to seep water inside the rock. It can be disgusting at times to stick a body part into the dark, wet crack as you progress up the route. Leading this route can throw the climber off balance and cause the leader to fall because of its awkward nature. You have to stop and think about what you are doing because the crack pulls you the opposite direction of your natural balance point. We enjoyed this wild crack and finished the day with renewed enthusiasm for more climbing.

After descending to the ground, we packed up our gear and hiked out to the main trail through Echo Canyon. Barry had worked on the trail with others last year to drastically improve the approach to the Triple Cracks area. Three roots had become exposed due to erosion and trail braiding was a problem. Barry's trail team worked hard to correct these problems. As we walked to Echo Canyon we stopped at the new self-composting toilet which Barry built the exterior building and outside deck. It is a handsome structure with a beautiful view from the deck.

Barry wanted to watch the end of the day from the top of the dome, so we hiked up the lower mantle slab on the side of the dome. As we propped our heads on our packs the sun started to set and twilight came upon us. The curve of the dome offered a beautiful landscape line against the sunset. Someone was playing a guitar nearby also enjoying the end of the day. There is something very special about laying on top of this huge solid granite rock in the evening.

Hiking back to the parking lot to the cars was easy down the Main Dome Trail even though the light was fading. We both decided that our adventure climbing day at Enchanted Rock was a lot of fun. Next time we will go to another part of the park and have new adventures. We both have a great amount of respect for Enchanted Rock as it has enriched our lives over a long period of time.

## THE STORYTELLERS

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 39

fire with his special fire-stick.

"Uncle Ira, were those mastodons really here, at Enchanted Rock?"

"Yes, a very long time ago."

"I mean, exactly how long?" Jason asked.

"Well, I'm not exactly sure. Say 12,000 years ago."

"And Indians were here, too?"

"Yes," I replied, "and they still are, a little."

"Where?" He looked around as if maybe I meant there were still out there, in the dark.

"Not out there," I smiled, "they're in us. I'm part Indian and so are you—through your mother."

"Cherokee?"

"Right. And their true name, the name they call themselves, is *Aniyunwiya*—The Principal People."

The fire was beginning to die despite Jason's prodding, and his questions held longer and longer pauses.

"We better turn in," I advised, thinking more of my own weariness than the young boy. "It must be almost ten."

"Nine thirty-seven," Jason proclaimed, "and 55 seconds." Pause. "Nine thirty-eight." He continued consulting his digital wristwatch, a new gadget received for Christmas, while I listened to the primal sounds of crickets, frogs, and owls call to each other just past the reach of the firelight. I could hear, too, the rustle of dead leaves start and stop and begin again. It was an armadillo out for a nocturnal meal. They're the only beast in the woods that makes as much noise as humans.

"Away down south in the land of cotton... " Suddenly my mind found the words to "Dixie" the instant before I realized the source of the tune was Jason's watch. Through the magic of micro computer technology it could play a futuresque instrumental of every verse of "Dixie." I wondered how he managed to wait so long to surprise me with this aspect of his new watch. He beamed with pride.

"It's 9:45," he said. "That's some alarm ain't it, Uncle Ira? You want me to put some more wood on the fire? It's still early."

"It's late enough for me," I said, stepping into the moon shadows near the tent. I had barely spoken when Jason added another question to the night.

"Uncle Ira, are you still here?"

---

PORTIONS OF THIS STORY WERE ORIGINALLY PUBLISHED IN *SACRED SITES—A TRAVELER'S GUIDE TO NORTH AMERICA'S MOST POWERFUL, MYSTICAL LANDMARKS*, BY NATASHA PETERSON; CONTEMPORARY BOOKS, CHICAGO/NEW YORK, 1988.

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## LAKE BUCHANAN EAGLES

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 27

All these experiences still leave me in awe some sixteen years since I saw my first Lake Buchanan eagle.

So, over the years the seasonal returnings of the Bald Eagles on Buchanan lake have become a source of pleasure and of self discovery for more and more people. In the fall, the returning Monarch butterflies tell that the eagles are on their way. And, like a renewal in the spring, the season of the eagles offers a sign of hope. A constant in what often seems an ever-changing world.

### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Charles Tischler as born in Austin, Texas, on July 24, 1951. He was raised on South Austin, Texas by his veterinarian father and his teacher/naturalist mother. For the first ten years of life, Charles was the youngest of three quite savage boys. Then little sister Ann came along and Charles gained an almost unbridled freedom to haunt the hills and to stalk and stumble along the countless paths. He graduated from the University of Texas at Austin with a Bachelor of Journalism degree.

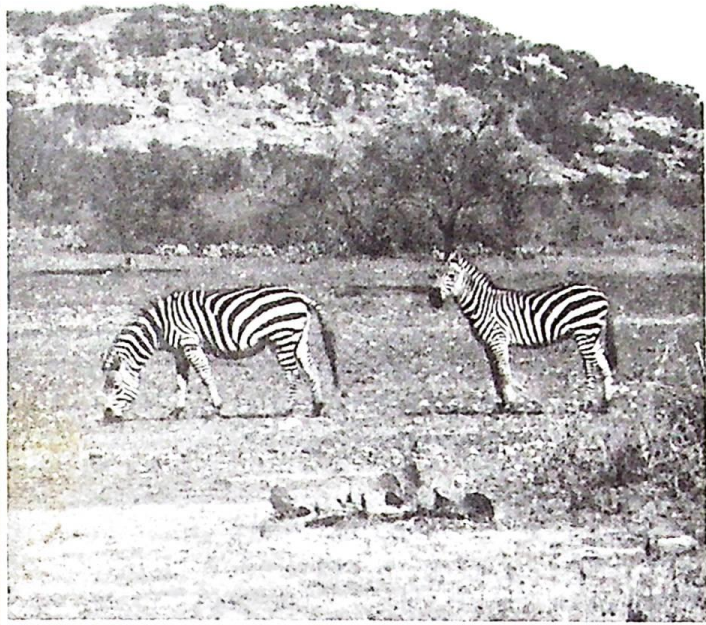
*For the first ten years of life, Charles was the youngest of three quite savage boys. Then little sister Ann came along and Charles gained an almost unbridled freedom to haunt the hills and to stalk and stumble along the countless paths.*

He has over twelve years as a technicalwriter/editor for both Texas Instruments and The University of Texas, where he currently has served over eight years as information coordinator for the Separations Research Program, and the Environmental Solutions Program both within the Center for Energy Studies at the J.J. Pickle Research Campus.

Tischler has published hundreds of articles in newsletters, magazines, newspapers and journals. His photographs have appeared in local, state and national publications. He has appeared as spokesperson for the Lake Buchanan Bald Eagles on several televised accounts of the birds including the CBS Evening News, The Texas Parks and Wildlife Television series, Made in Texas.

Charles has just signed on as continuing contributor to the *Enchanted Rock Magazine* in order that he might share further his love and discoveries in the land above the Balcones Escarpment.

## ROADSIDE SAFARI



**ZEBRA IN THE HILL COUNTRY.** YOU NEVER KNOW WHAT YOU'LL SEE ON A WEEKEND DRIVE. THIS PHOTO WAS TAKEN ON HIGHWAY 71 3.8 MILES EAST OF THE HWY 16 INTERSECTION AT LLANO. PHOTO BY RA KENNEDY.



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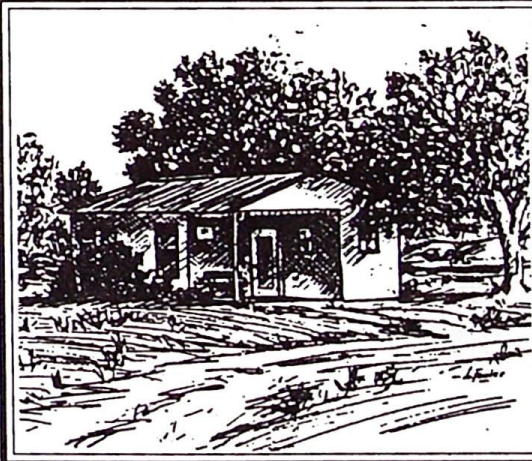
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IRA KENNEDY

Presented in this 20-page booklet with illustrations are six prophecies from Black Elk, Wovoka, Lame Deer, and others. A commentary by the author encourages non-literal interpretations and the suggestion that the "change of worlds" may require a union of Native American and Western world views.

*"The old ways of the Native Americans cannot answer all of the dilemmas we face now and tomorrow. But, our present way of life is dysfunctional and outmoded. Choosing one or the other does not bring us into the new earth cycle envisioned by the prophets."*

-Ira Kennedy

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## HISTORIC LLANO

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 10

Another, gadolinite, found in abundance under the waters of Lake Buchanan on Barringer Hill, is found elsewhere only in Norway.

Thomas Edison used yttrium, an extract from gadolinite, to perfect the filament in his electric light bulb until he discovered another, less expensive element. (In 1887, yttrium brought \$144 an ounce.) At the same time, other rare minerals containing the same extract turned up on Barringer Hill. These were nivenite, fergusonite, monofergusonite, thorigummite and yytrialite. Their discovery focused worldwide attention on Llano County, not so much because they contained yttrium, but because these minerals were new to science.

But exciting as this all may be, what is probably more significant is that precious minerals still in demand have been discovered here. These are none other than gold, silver and fresh water pearls. In addition, though the claim has not been verified to date, it is rumored that sapphire has been found here—one nugget the size of two fists. The story goes that a rancher found it on his place and, not knowing it was sapphire, was using it for a doorstep. He sold it to a visitor, who recognized the gem but failed to mention that fact, for \$12!

While the presence of rare minerals put Llano County on the map, another product of the uplift contributed greatly to that fame. This is Enchanted Rock, a solid rock formation which rises 500 feet in the air and covers 640 acres. Lying 24 miles south of the city of Llano, this Llano County jewel is the oldest rock formation in Texas and is the largest stone mountain still in its natural state in the United States.

Adding to the importance of this geological wonder, several species of plants which the Smithsonian Institute considers rare and endangered grow on or near the Rock's base. One of these, the Basin Bellflower, a delicate, light blue flower, is found only on granite outcroppings of the

Llano region. Growing in profusion along the lower slopes of the Rock, this is the only site where the endangered species is protected.

Nor does Enchanted Rock's fame stop there. The fabled stone mass contains one of the largest caves known to have developed in an Inselberg Mass, one of the geological names for the Rock. The main cave is over 1,000 feet long and contains 35 different entrances; beneath it is a smaller cave.

Nature, it seems, outdid herself when she put together the unique package of wonders later labeled "Llano County, Land of Legend and Lure." Even more emphatically might this county be called Nature's Wonderland.

For truly fascinating rewards, experience the diversities of Llano and Llano County, where every visit yields a rich world of adventure and discovery.

## How Long Does It Last?

We all know discarded plastic and aluminum can linger in the environment for years. But, have you ever wondered how long that orange peel will take to disappear in nature? Here are a few facts supplied by Enchanted Rock State Natural Area.

Cigarette butts: 1-5 years  
 Aluminum cans and tabs: 500 years  
 Glass bottles: 1,000 years  
 Plastic bags: 10-20 years  
 Plastic coated paper: 5 years  
 Plastic film containers: 20-30 years  
 Nylon fabric: 30-40 years  
 Leather: up to 50 years  
 Wool sox: 1-5 years  
 Orange & banana peels up to 5 years  
 Tin Cans: 50 years  
 Plastic six-pac holder: 100 years  
 Plastic bottles  
 & styrofoam: indefinitely

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*"I envy writer Dale Fry because he has, over the years, written a bunch of stories about the Highland Lakes region that I would have loved to write..."*  
 —Ross McSwain, San Angelo Standard-Times

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—*Consumers Digest*

November/December 1994

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