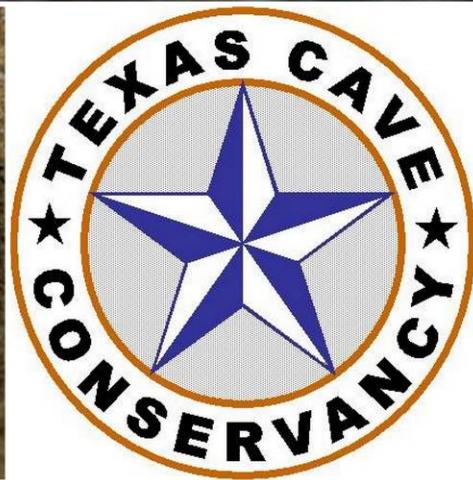
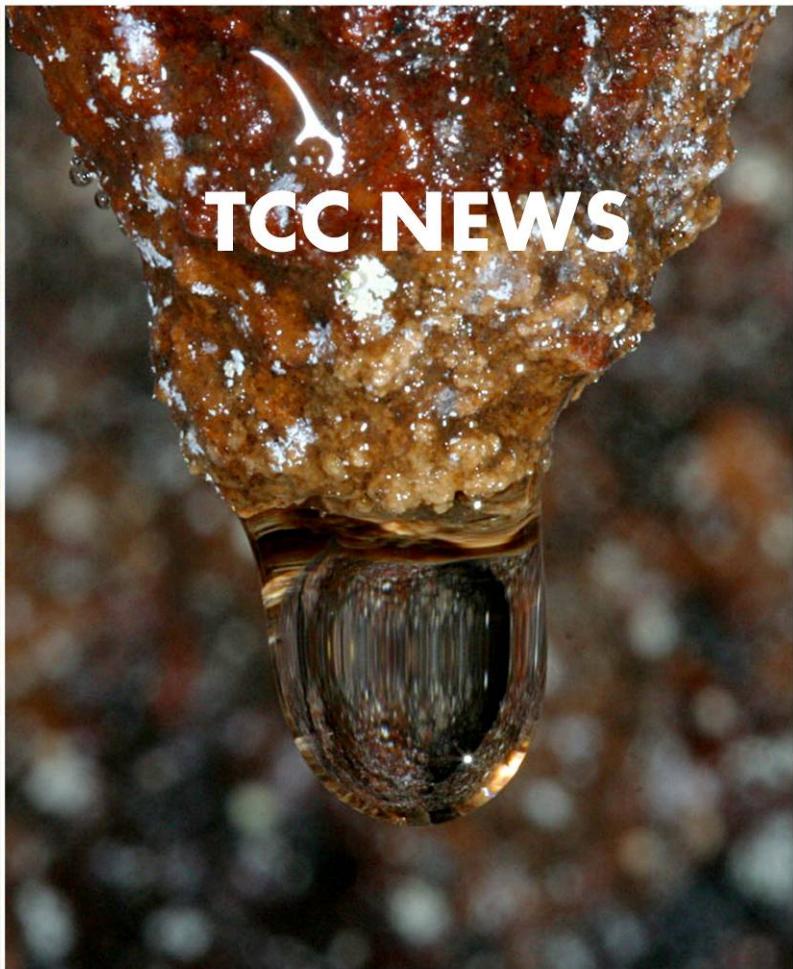




Texas Cave Conservancy News

Number 7

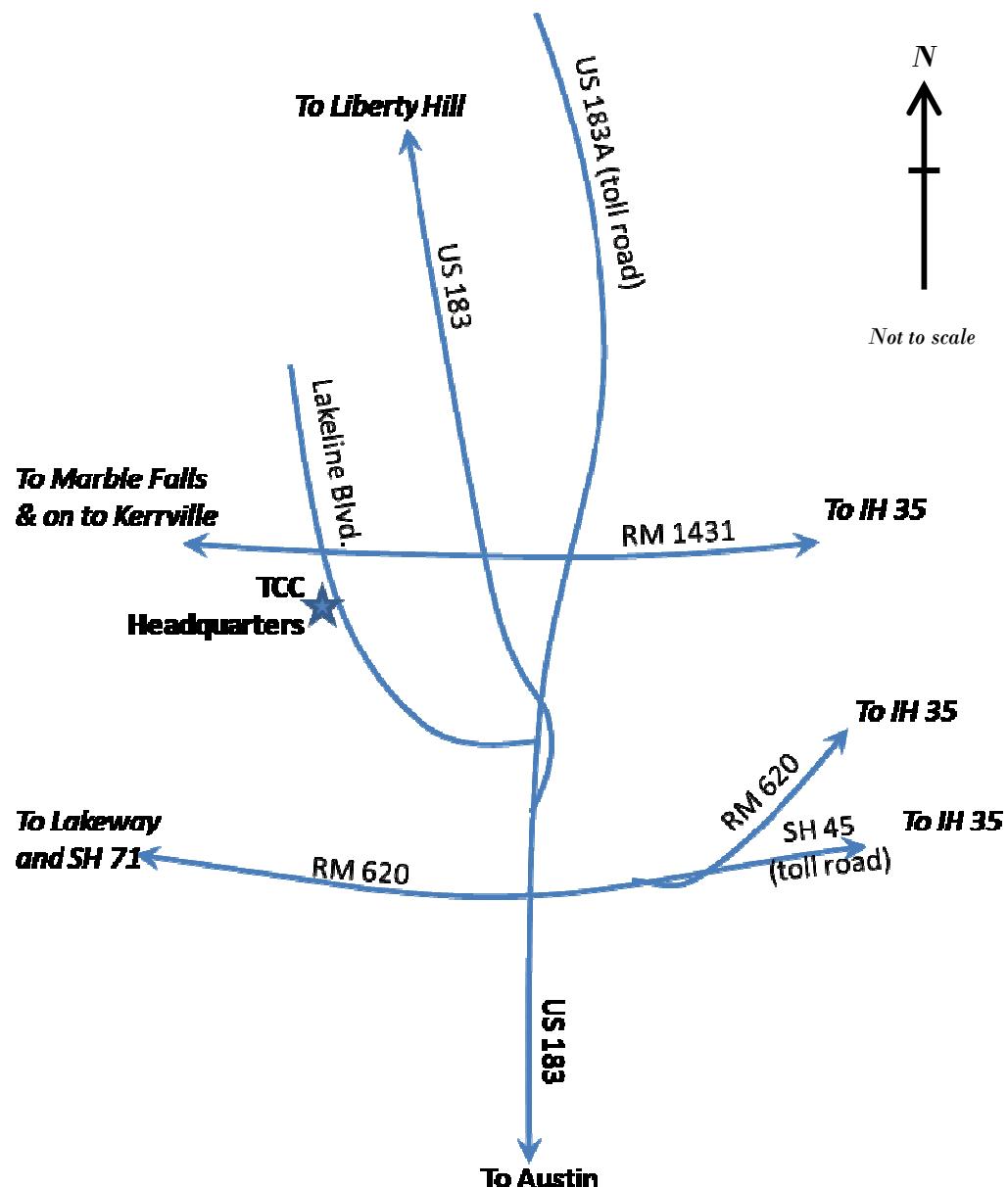
June 2009



Greetings

The Texas Cave Conservancy would like for you to include the Austin-Cedar Park, Texas area in your trip to the 2009 International Congress of Speleology (ICS). The focal point for your visit could be the TCC Headquarters and campground. You are welcome to stop by and use the TCC Headquarters as your Texas home starting Friday, July 17, 2009. As you can see from the map, it may be on your way to the ICS. Activities include camping, caving, cave preserve visitation, touring the Austin area and even a Saturday night party. Join us for chips & dips, beer & soda; cave slides and an over-all good time. Don't forget to include an evening visit to the downtown Austin bat flight.

**Mike Walsh,
PRESIDENT**



Austin Day Trip

The following is a suggestion for a great Austin day. Starting at the TCC Headquarters, drive out Ranch Road 2222, turn onto Mount Bonnell Road and stop to see the great views.



Continue down Mount Bonnell Road, turn left on West 35th Street and then turn right onto Exposition Boulevard. Follow it through Tarrytown neighborhood and turn left onto Lake Austin Boulevard. Deep Eddy pool is on the right along the river. Stop by, you may want to swim here rather than the more heavily visited Barton Springs pool.



Following a swim continue on Lake Austin Boulevard; turn left onto Lamar Boulevard to cross the river. Turn right on Barton Springs Road to reach the pool and the great cave exhibit located in the Barton Springs pool house. There are several great places to eat along the way. Barton Springs even has its own beer.



After the swim, return to Barton Springs Road, turn right and bear left onto Riverside Drive then drive to the Ann Richards Bridge (Congress Avenue). Park in the parking lot on the right just before the bridge and watch the great bat flight. Call Bat Flight Hotline at 512-416-5700, extension 3636 for the bat flight times.

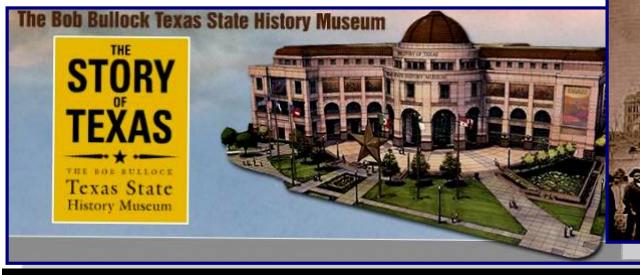


Texas State Capital & Museum

The Texas State Capital and the Texas State Museum offer the visitor an opportunity to see Texas history in action. The state capital has been the scene of a number of political struggles, movies and other strange events. Take the tour to the top of the capital dome, 311 feet (95m) above the floor of the rotunda. The Lady Liberty statue was placed on top of the dome in 1888. Be sure to check out the underground capital extension. The Texas State Museum is located just to the north of the state capital. There are a number of great Texas exhibits, the Spirit of Texas movie and even an IMAX theater. Following your visit, check out Scholz Garten to see where Texas laws are argued out. Scholz's is Texas oldest beer garden and it has been a caver hangout since the early 1950s. Pennsylvania caver, Squire Lewis and friends spent an afternoon here in 1966 while Charles Whitman was shooting from the University of Texas Tower.

Did you know?

1. Texas is popularly known as the Lone Star State.
2. This year marks the fourth NSS Convention to be held in Texas. Previous Conventions were in 1964, 1978, and 1994.
3. Texas is the only state to have the flags of 6 different nations fly over it. They are: Spain, France, Mexico, Republic of Texas, Confederate States, and the United States.
4. The Texas Speleological Association was first called the Texas Region of the National Speleological Society.
5. Jim White, born in Menard, Texas, later went on to explore caves in the Carlsbad, New Mexico area.
6. Texas was an independent nation from 1836 to 1845. The Texas consulate in London is located down a small alleyway behind the Palace of St. James.
7. Prior to his marriage, former President Lyndon B. Johnson explored caves in the Burnet, Texas area, among them Shepards Cave, now known as Longhorn Caverns.
8. Austin claims to be the live music capital of the world, with usually over fifty live bands playing each night, often with no cover charge. At the South by Southwest music festival each spring, there are over 2000 bands from around the world.
9. NSS President, Gordon Birkimer was made an honorary Texan.
10. The Dr Pepper soft drink was invented in Waco in 1885. The Dublin Dr Pepper plant, 85 miles west of Waco, still uses pure imperial cane sugar in its product. There is no period after the Dr in Dr Pepper.
11. "Keep Austin Weird" is an unofficial motto of the city. This is a city that strives to support the local music scene and local eateries, and rebels wherever possible against corporate invasion.
12. Texas has had over 70 caving groups in the past few years. Few have managed to survive.
13. The nine-banded armadillo is the official State small mammal, the horned lizard is the state reptile and the Mexican free-tailed bat is the official flying mammal.
14. The first word



(Continued on page 5)

(Continued from page 4)

- spoken from the moon was “Houston”, on July 20, 1969.
15. The state capitol building in Austin opened May 16, 1888. The building’s dome is 311 feet (95m) tall. This is 7 feet (2.1m) taller

than the United States capitol building in Washington, D.C. To raise money for construction, Texas sold over 3 million acres of land. Today, that land is valued at over 7 billion dollars. If we had to do the same thing now, it would be the most expensive building in the world.

Hamilton Pool & Westcave Preserve



Here are two great places on the way to Kerrville. They are about 45 minutes from the TCC campground. **Hamilton Pool** is a county park southwest of Austin. It is an absolutely fabulous place to hike, swim and observe what the power of water can do. Slabs of limestone line the pool both in and out of the water. There is usually a waterfall pouring into the pool from above, but some days just a series of trickles due to the extended drought. The trail from the parking area is pretty steep so watch out for the other tourists. At the bottom of the little valley you can turn right and take a short walk to the pool or turn left and have a $\frac{1}{2}$ -mile (800m) walk to the Pedernales River. The creek that runs from the pool to the river is lined with huge cypress trees. When it is warm enough you can swim in Hamilton Pool. The water is chilly, and jumping from the waterfall is prohibited. It is open daily, and there is a entry fee (\$8 per vehicle).

Westcave Preserve is a natural treasure of the Texas Hill Country, possessing unique and majestic beauty and ecological diversity. Located adjacent to the Pedernales River in southwestern Travis County, this 30-acre gem is managed by the non-profit Westcave Preserve Corporation. The highlight of the site is its 40-foot waterfall backed by caves, tumbling over fern-covered tra-

vertine columns into an emerald pool. Westcave Preserve was privately held in the 1960s and 1970s, and was a favorite spot for picnickers and trespassers who damaged the site with heavy foot traffic. John Covert Watson established the non-profit Westcave Preserve Corporation in 1976, which then borrowed funds to purchase the cave and surrounding 29 acres. In 1983 a partnership was formed with the Lower Colorado River Authority, who paid off the note and established a dollar-a-year, 99-

Westcave Preserve Corporation to manage and sustain the Preserve and offer it as an educational resource. Careful restoration and close management has allowed a nearly complete recovery, and the site is now protected through defined land management practices and an emphasis on developing positive relationships with surrounding landowners. Open to the public on weekends only. No admission fee, but fees are charged for guided tours to the canyon.

To get to Hamilton Pool & the Westcave Preserve, take Highway 71 west of Austin. Turn left on Hamilton Pool Road (Ranch Road 3238). After you pass Highway 12, Hamilton Pool will be



Westcave Preserve (Continued on page 6)

*Westcave Preserve
(Continued from page 5)*

just over 5 miles ahead. If you plan on going, go early if you go in the summer, as the park can get crowded. They shut down the entrance when the parking area is full. To reach the Westcave Preserve, continue on Hamilton Pool Road, cross the river and it will be up the hill and on the right. Continue on Hamilton Pool Road (now called Ranch Road 962) to reach Kerrville and the 2009 NSS Convention. At Highway 281, turn left and

follow it to Johnson City, turn right on Highway 290 to Fredericksburg. Take Highway 16 to Kerrville from Fredericksburg.

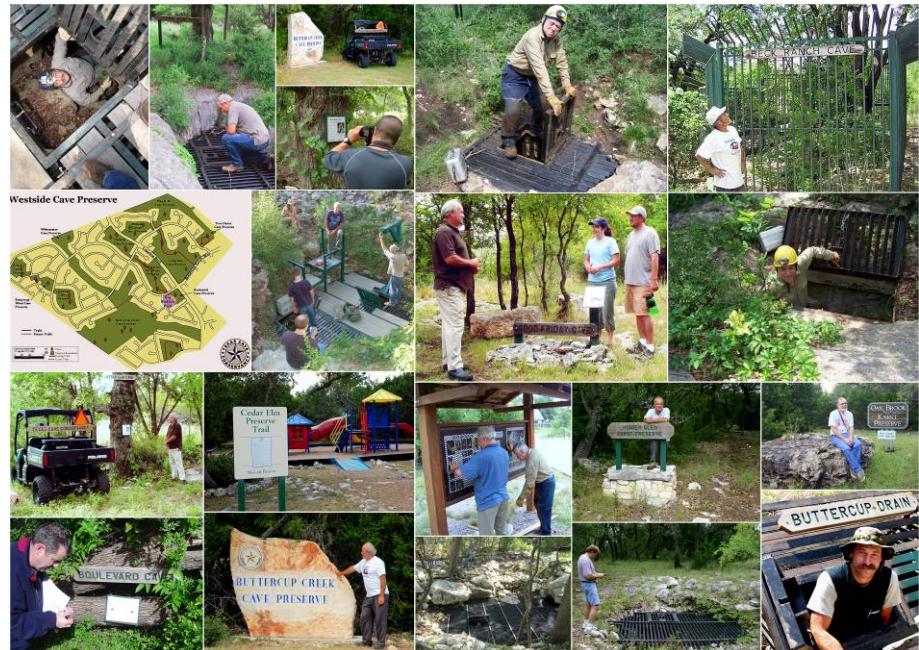


TCC Cave Preserves

There are over 100 cave preserves in the Austin area set aside to protect caves, the cave life and the aquifer as related to caves. The state of Texas requires significant aquifer recharge caves to be preserved, the City of Austin requires that most caves in their jurisdiction be preserved, and the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service requires those cave with endangered species be protected. The Texas Cave Conservancy conducts cave-related land management activities. We bring in approximately \$75,000 per year protecting caves in the Austin area. The Texas Cave Conservancy has cave management contracts that allow us to work toward the protection of the caves, the cave life and the critical habitat areas.

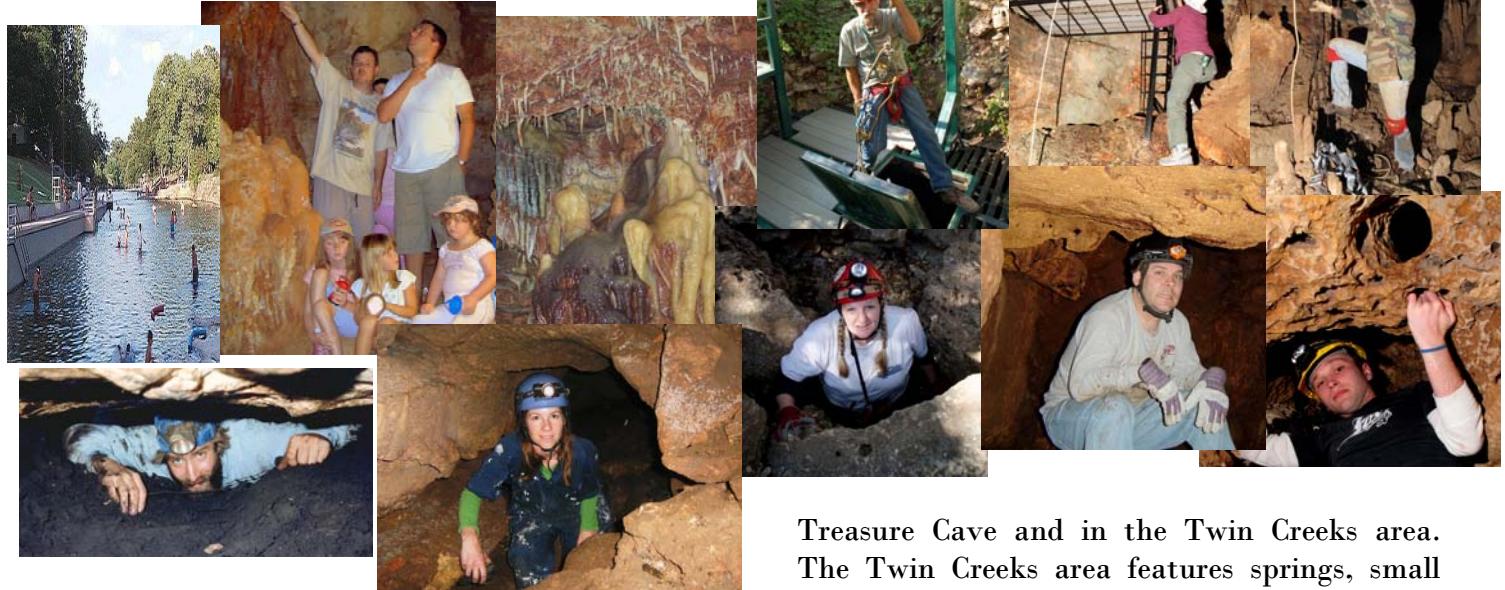
We currently manage approximately 200 caves on more than 60 preserves, which range in size from a single residential lot to over 100 acres (40.5ha). Wherever possible we go beyond the minimum requirements required by the contracts. We treat the exotic invasive Red Imported Fire Ants throughout the year using non-chemical treatment methods such as boiling water. In addition, we are required to monitor the caves for any sign of problems. We have installed temperature and humidity recorders inside many of the caves.

Once each year, we have a permitted Endangered Species specialist conduct in-cave assessments. We work with several cavers that are authorized to conduct these studies. The TCC has established an Urban Cave Management and Cave Monitoring course for cavers to obtain training to assist these specialists. Following the classroom training cavers go out into the field to assist in the cave monitoring. When they have completed 25 hours in the field with the experts, they will receive a certificate. Cavers have a place in cave protection and study. The following photos show some of the cave preserves.



Caves, Cavers & Caving

The Texas Cave Conservancy will have several caves available for the weekend of July 17-19 and also for caving on the 22nd of July.



The caves range from Avery Ranch Cave, a small educational show cave with lights and a deck, to several tough crawlway caves. Both vertical and horizontal caves will be available. The deepest pit is over 50 feet (15m), and the longest crawl is over 1 mile (1600m).

Dies Ranch Treasure Cave is the TCC-owned vertical training site. This small cave has a 20-foot (6m) drop. The second entrance allows for non-vertical access. We had over 150 visitors in this cave last Cave Day. Most of the Cedar Park area caves are small but several are interesting. Even the non-cavers can enjoy a day of caving at Avery Ranch Cave, Dies Ranch

Treasure Cave and in the Twin Creeks area. The Twin Creeks area features springs, small waterfalls, tall trees, a 150+ year old historical log cabin and a good Indian shelter cave. Stop by the TCC Headquarters for cave information.



Austin Area Swimming Holes

Austin is blessed to have so many great places to swim and to cool off. These are just a few that you can visit while in town. Deep Eddy & Barton Springs are great, but they are cold, about 70° F (21°C). Hippie Hollow is on Lake Austin and the water should be warmer. Hamilton Pool is always worth a visit. Upper & Lower Bull Creek are close to the TCC Headquarters and are very laid back. Have fun and remember to “Keep Austin Weird”.

Starting at the TCC Headquarters, drive to Highway 183 and turn right, then turn right again onto Highway 620, turn left onto Ranch to Market Road 2222, cross Highway 360 and turn immediately left onto Lakewood Street. Bull Creek Park is on the right.



To reach Deep Eddy and Barton Springs, cross Highway 360 and continue on Ranch to Market Road 2222. Turn onto Mount Bonnell Road and stop to see the great views from this City of Austin park.



Continue down Mount Bonnell Road, turn left on West 35th Street and then turn right onto Exposition Boulevard. Follow it through the Tarrytown neighborhood and turn left onto Lake Austin Boulevard. Deep Eddy pool is on the right along the river. You may want to swim here rather than the more heavily visited Barton Springs pool. Watch for the Magnolia Café on the left near where you turn to Deep Eddy.

To reach Barton Springs, continue on Lake Austin Boulevard, under MoPac Boulevard, turn right onto Lamar Boulevard to cross the river. Turn right on Barton Springs



Road to reach the pool and the great cave exhibit located in the Barton Springs pool house. Watch for the Green Mesquite restaurant on the right when you first turn onto Barton Springs Road.

Starting at the TCC Headquarters, drive to Highway 183 and turn right, then turn right again onto Highway 620. When you reach Ranch to Market Road 2222, continue 1.3 miles (2.1Km) and follow the signs to Windy Point & Hippie Hollow. Turn right at the first traffic light onto Comanche Trail. After a half a mile (800m) you will see The Oasis, stop on the way out for a drink, a great view of the Lake and the sunset. To Hippie Hollow continue to drive 1.5 miles (2.4km), and you will see the park entrance on your left.



Starting at the TCC Headquarters drive to Highway 183 and turn right, then turn right again onto Highway 620. Drive to the end of Highway 620 and turn right on Highway 71. Turn left at RR 3238 locally known as Hamilton Pool Road. Travel 14 miles (22.5Km) and turn right into the park. To reach Westcave Preserve continue on Hamilton Pool Road, cross the river and enter the first gate to the right.



To reach Kerrville, turn right when you leave the Westcave Preserve on Ranch Road 962. Follow it for 17 miles (27.4km) to Highway 281. Turn left and head towards Johnson City, then to Fredericksburg, and Kerrville.

Austin Area Restaurants

County Line on the Lake

5204 Ranch to Market Road 2222

tel (512) 346-3664.

Barbecue on the edge of Bull Creek, just off Lake Austin. This is on the way to the Bull Creek swimming hole and to Mount Bonnell & Austin.

Magnolia Café

2304 Lake Austin Blvd.

tel (512) 478-8645

Good potatoes and egg dishes. Hippies and movie stars get together at this café just across from the turnoff to the Deep Eddy Swimming pool.

Scholtz Garten

1607 San Jacinto Street

tel (512) 474-1998

This is Austin's oldest restaurant and bar. August Scholz, a German immigrant and confederate veteran, built his public bar and cafe in 1866, the year following the end of the Civil War. In 1966, Pennsylvania caver Squire Lewis and associates drank beer here while Charles Whitman was shooting people from the University of Texas Tower. Stop by after a visit to the State Capital or Museum.

Green Mesquite

1400 Barton Springs Rd.

tel (512) 479-0485.

Lots more than good barbecue and live music. This is on the way to the Barton Springs Swimming pool.

Threadgill's

301 West Riverside Drive

tel (512) 472-9304

One of the city's oldest music venues, this legendary spot offers an extensive menu of Southern-style comfort foods such as meatloaf and chicken-fried steak, plus a mind-boggling array of vegetables. Janis Joplin got her start at the Threadgill's up on North Lamar Boulevard. This is close to the Congress Avenue bat-watching area.

Iron Works BBQ

100 Red River Street

tel (512) 478-4855.

Longtime barbecue joint in the heart of downtown Austin. After the fall of the Alamo, General Santa Anna released Susana Dickinson to spread the word of the massacre. She later moved to Austin and built her home at this location.

Blue Bonnet Café

211 U.S. Highway 281 South, Marble Falls

tel (830) 693-2344

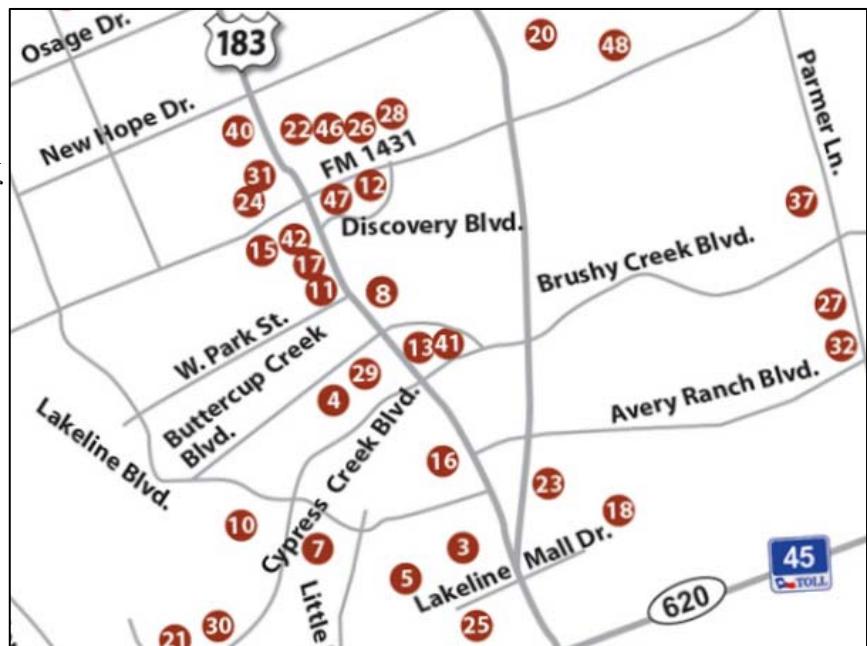
On the way to Kerrville, the home-style menu at this classic Texas cafe will satisfy any hankering. The chicken-fried steak and pot roast are outstanding, and the pies feature tall mounds of meringue over cream fillings. You can also visit the entrance to 155-foot-deep (47m) Dead Mans Hole, a cave just outside of town.



Cedar Park Area Restaurants

To reach most of these, take Park Street from the TCC Headquarters to Highway183. The Highway183 is also called South Bell Boulevard to the right of Park Street and North Boulevard to the left of Park Street. The caver spots are in brown below.

- 40 **Taco Cabana**, 100 Walton Way. ***Best Mexican food chain.*** Wal-Mart is across the street.
- 31 **McDonald's**, 1102 North Bell Boulevard.
- 24 **Taqueria La Tapatia**, 1101 North Bell Boulevard. ***Most authentic Mexican food in area.***
- J&J's BBQ and Catering, 300 Whitestone Boulevard. ***Best BBQ & Breakfast in area.***
- 42 **Burger King**, 700 North Bell Boulevard.
- 17 **La Feria Restaurant**, 315 North Bell Boulevard. ***Best atmosphere & good priced drinks***
- 11 **Hunan Chef Restaurant**, 150 North Bell Boulevard.
- 22 **Smokey Mo's BBQ**, 100 Whitestone Boulevard.
- 46 **HEB Grocery**, 1045 North Bell Boulevard.
- 26 **Kentucky Fried Chicken**, 1000 North Bell.
- 47 **Taco Bell**, 950 North Bell Boulevard.
- 12 **Wendy's**, 810 North Bell Boulevard.
- 8 **Moonie's Burgers**, 200 South Bell Boulevard. ***Best hamburgers & Texas atmosphere.***
- 20 **1890 Ranch Shopping Center**, Highway183 Toll & Highway1431
- 48 **Expanded Food Court** with 20+ restaurants.
- 13 **Jardin Corona**, 600 South Bell Boulevard.
- 41 **Domino's Pizza**, 610 South Bell Boulevard.
- 29 **Springhill Restaurant**, 200 Buttercup Creek Boulevard.



- 4 **The Dig Pub**, 401 Cypress Creek Road. ***Three British cavers hang out there on Thursday nights.***
- 10 **Guadalajara Mexican Restaurant**, 1525 Cypress Creek Road.
- 30 **Whataburger** 1528 Cypress Creek Road. ***Best Texas hamburger chain.***
- 21 **Jack in The Box**, 1535 Cypress Creek Road.
- 7 **McDonald's**, 1524 Cypress Creek Road.
- 17 **Texas Land & Cattle Company**, 14010 Highway183. ***Best pricey steaks in the area.***
- 3 **Lakeline Mall Shopping Center.**
- 5 **Food Court & other restaurants**
- 25 **Texican Café**, 11066 Pecan Park Boulevard.
- 23 **Cici's Pizza**. 200 South Bell Boulevard. Highway side of Target. ***Best deal on pizza in the area.***
- 18 **Mama Fu's**, 11301 Lakeline Boulevard.,
- 27 **Quiznos Subs**, 202 Walton Way
- 32 **Waterloo Ice House**. 14900 Avery Ranch Boulevard

TCC Headquarters & Campground

The Texas Cave Conservancy Headquarters is located on a 4.2 acre (1.7ha) site in Cedar Park, Texas. We have a Texas ranch-style house, a party area, 25 tent pads, additional tent areas, auto camping, two showers and parking for forty-fifty autos. Check out the Bubble Cave Conservancy Shower and bathroom.

We will be ready for visitors on Friday July 17, 2009. On Saturday evening July 18, 2009 the TCC will host a party with a Mexican "Day of the Dead" theme. The quarry over the hill is not available to us at this time, however, be sure to check it out from the ridge. Caving and sightseeing will be the main Sunday activities. Come on out and enjoy this little piece of Texas.



Austin Area Wednesday Day Trips

If you can not make it to the TCC Headquarters before the ICS/NSS Convention begins you may want to come to the Austin area on Wednesday, July 20, 2009 on a Day Trip. If you want to go caving, you will need to go by the TCC Headquarters to pick up information sheets on how to get to the various caves. The rest of the stuff you can do on your own. Once again, the Texas Cave Conservancy welcomes you to Texas.

It is approximately 105 miles (169km) from Kerrville to Cedar Park.

Kerrville -Highway 16 to Fredericksburg	25 Miles (40Km)
Take Highway 290 to Johnson City	30 Miles (48Km)
Johnson City-Highway 281 to Highway 962 (Westcave & Hamilton Pool)	10 Miles (16Km)

To reach Westcave & Hamilton Pool, turn right and look for the signs.

To reach the TCC Headquarters continue on Highway 281

Johnson City-Highway 281 to Marble Falls	20 Miles (32Km)
Marble Falls- right on Highway 1431 to Cedar Park	20 Miles (32Km)
Kerrville to Cedar Park	105 Miles (169Km)
Kerrville to Westcave & Hamilton Pool	75 Miles (121Km)

Cedar Park Activities

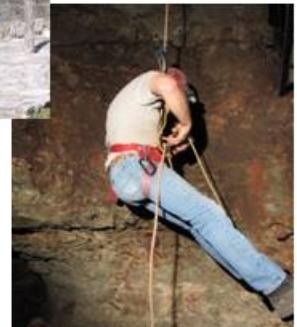
- Texas Cave Conservancy Headquarters
- Dies Ranch Indian Shelter & Log Cabin
- Dies Ranch Cave
- Avery Ranch Cave & others

Austin Activities

- Mount Bonnell
- Deep Eddy Pool
- Barton Springs Pool & Cave Exhibit
- Texas State Capital
- Texas State Museum
- Sixth Street & Warehouse District
- Ann W. Richards Congress Avenue Bridge bat flight.
- Hamilton Pool
- Westcave Preserve

Approximately 120 miles (193Km) from Austin to Kerrville
(best night route)

Austin via Interstate Highway 35 to New Braunfels	45 Miles (72.5Km)
New Braunfels-Highway 46 to Interstate Highway 10	45 Miles (72.5Km)
Interstate Highway 10 to Kerrville	30 Miles (48Km)



TCC Summer Event

In recent years the TCC has sponsored weekend caving trips to the Camp Wood area in west Texas. This year we are staying closer to home, and invite all ICS participants to stop by the TCC headquarters in Cedar Park for camping, swimming, caving, and a Saturday night party.

To get there, drive west on Highway 1431 from Interstate Highway 35 north of Austin. After crossing Highway 183, turn left on Lakeline Boulevard. At the next traffic signal, turn right on West Park Street and you will be at the TCC headquarters and campground. You can get to Marble Falls by continuing west on Highway 1431, and from there to Kerrville. There is also a new REI store (camping and hiking equipment) on Interstate Highway 35 at the Highway 1431 interchange.

We have a party area, 25 tent pads, additional tent areas, auto camping, two showers and parking for forty-fifty autos. Check out the Bubble Cave Conservancy shower and bathroom. We will be ready for visitors on Friday July 17, 2009. On Saturday evening July 18, 2009 the TCC will host a party with a Mexican "Day of the Dead" theme.

Friday

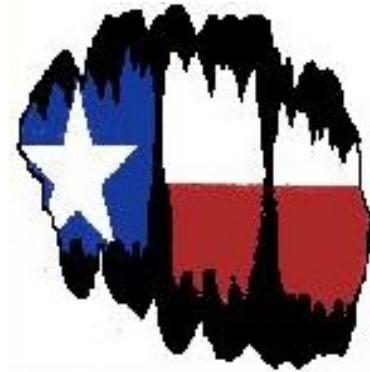
- Camping – caving –cave preserve trips- Austin area day trips

Saturday

- Breakfast in Cedar Park
- Twin Creeks Tour (history, geology, Indian
- Shelter, log cabin - Bill Larson 10:00 AM
- Cave Preserve Tour – Mike Walsh 11:30 AM
- Avery Ranch Cave All Day
- Dies Ranch Treasure Cave All Day
- Dies Ranch Shelter Cave All Day
- Caving All Day
- Natural Austin All Day
- Texas Capital & Texas Museum All Day
- Hamilton Pool & Westcave Preserve All Day
- Texas Swimming Holes All Day
- TCC Headquarters All Day
- (Library and air conditioning)
- Dinner in Cedar Park or Austin
- TCC Headquarters Party starts. 7:30 PM
- Hall of Texas Cavers & Mexico slides.
- Dave Cave's Salon -Gordon Birkhimer
- Beer-Strawberry Margaritas & more
- Ann Richards Congress Avenue Bridge bat flight 8:00 PM

Sunday

- Breakfast in Cedar Park or Austin
- Caving-Swimming-Sightseeing



Mexican Day of the Dead Party



Saturday night
7:30 PM on-
July 18, 2009



Join us at the TCC Headquarters after dinner for a Texas welcome. Texas & Mexican music, Mexican snacks, Mexican beer & frozen margaritas will be available. NSS President Gordon Birkimer, the head bartender, will serve the margaritas at *Dave Cave's Saloon*. We will even have soft drinks and water!

TCC Hall of Texas Cavers photos and Mexico photos will be shown at the *TCC Theater*. We will be here for the party, rain or shine. We want to show you from the get-go that Texans are not "all hat and no cattle". If you ask, we may even show you some of the neighborhood Texas longhorn cattle.

Dave Cave's Saloon

Why do Mexican Freetails zig-zag? TEQUILA!



For additional information contact:

Texas Cave Conservancy

1800 West Park Street

Cedar Park, Texas 78613

tel: 512-249-2283

TCC-caves@austin.rr.com

We never know who will call requesting access to caves for scientific studies. We work with cavers throughout Texas, the rest of the country and even cavers from other nations. Caving groups from around the state stay at the TCC campground while caving and sightseeing in the Austin area. In addition to caving, cavers are welcome to stay here while seeing other great Austin area attractions. Sections of this newsletter will be used for other purposes so please bear with us.