



RavenStar Outdoor Education

501(c)(3) Nonprofit

The Raven Report

August, 2011

Welcome to Fall! I hope this newsletter finds you enjoying some cooler (if not cool) weather. You can feel the change in the air as school settles down into a routine and the hot days of summer let go their hold on the days and nights in South Central Texas.

The weather in New Braunfels may be getting cooler, but some people are hot under the collar about the events surrounding the Disposable Container Ban being put to a vote in November. If you haven't had a chance to review what's at stake for our beautiful little river, please scroll down to get our take on it as well as some links to other people's views.

On a brighter note, we've got some fun events going on this month so don't forget to mark your calendar and join us.



RavenStar Outdoor Education and the Disposable Container Ban

Wow, things are really heating up on this issue. The RavenStar Board of Directors has voted to support the ban on disposable containers on the Comal River and Guadalupe River within the New Braunfels City Limits. As an environmentally-minded organization it was an obvious choice for us. Not only does the trash affect the perception of New Braunfels and it's rivers (thus negatively impacting tourism from people who respect the natural environment), but it also affects the local ecology, and eventually if allowed to continue as it has it will affect the way of life for everyone including the human species. If this drought has taught us nothing, it should be to respect our waterways and our water that is so precious.

RavenStar Outdoor Education is here to teach our children about our natural environment; how to study it, how to protect it and how to be good stewards of this precious resource that we have. The two rivers in this area are a BIG part of this. I hope you join us in taking this step to help protect what we have for the people who come here, ourselves, our children and future generations.

If you are interested in more information on this subject here are some links:

[Support the Ban](#)
[San Antonio News](#)
[An Opinion from Houston](#)

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Regional Fires

Regional Fires

Our hearts go out to our neighbors to the north and all over Texas who have been devastated by the wildfires that have been burning throughout the summer and the last few months. It is an unfortunate danger during a drought.

While these are horrible disasters, they are not uncommon historically and have often provided what the land needs to recover from extreme conditions - sort of Mother Nature's way of cleaning her slate and starting over.

From a biomass standpoint, grasslands (historically this area-Blackland Prairie) are completely different from woody-savannah or forests (which make up this area now) and have a huge advantage over forests or woody savannahs because about 2/3 of their bodies are underground vs. just the opposite ratio for a tree. When the historic fires blew through and migrating buffalo moved across the prairie, they cleared, tilled, fertilized and reseeded the grasslands all in one fell swoop. It was an amazingly perfect process.

If you'd like to read more about this, click the link below:

[Texas Parks & Wildlife](#)

2011 Central Texas Environmental Summit

"Collaboration Along the Corridor"

Hosted by
the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality

**Thursday, Nov. 3, 2011
9:00 a.m.–2:00 p.m.
Schertz Civic Center
1400 Schertz Parkway
Schertz, TX 78154**

You're invited! Come learn about and discuss solutions to environmental issues along the I-35 corridor.

At this event, you'll:

- Participate in discussions with TCEQ commissioners and elected officials about local environmental issues
- Browse exhibits from the TCEQ, and local and state agencies

Plan to attend this free, educational event that's open to all—the public, political leaders, neighborhood associations, nonprofits, businesses, and students.

Check for details, or register, at
TexasEnviroHelp.org



Use your mobile device to scan this code for more information.

Fall Programs...

**Observe the Moon Night
Saturday, October 8th, 2011
5-7pm at the
New Braunfels Public Library**

Featuring...

The Star Lab Planetarium
Preschool moon story time and craft
Build and drive a model lunar rover
Moon viewing with the New Braunfels Astronomy Club

**Our First Star Party!
Saturday, October 22, 2011
8-10 pm at the
Tye Preston Memorial Library**

The New Braunfels Astronomy Club will be bringing telescopes and be on hand to answer any questions. The Celestron 11" telescope will be installed in the observatory.

The idea is to keep your eyes adjusted to the dark. It takes half an hour for your eyes to adjust after being in the light (head lights, lights in the bathrooms, etc.) so plan accordingly and be aware that your actions can affect other people's experience. The Friends of the library will provide flashlights to borrow, or red cellophane to cover the lens if you bring your own. Please turn off your headlights before entering the parking lot (use your parking lights only). Bathrooms will be available inside the library. This is also a first for us, so we are as excited as you are. See you under the stars!

We offer many different programs and can also design a program for your specific situation or audience.

Our programs range from Astronomy to Zoology and everything in between. They are hands-on experiences for every age group and include activities and field lab work to engage all levels.

Check our website or contact us to reserve a spot for your group for the fall. We look forward to getting outside with you!

RavenStar Outdoor Education
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Find us on Facebook 

**Chairman
Darryl Shaper**

Calling all Homeschool Families!

Join RavenStar this fall for the monthly Park-schooling series

Programs will be offered on the 2nd Tuesday and 3rd Wednesday of each month October & November, 11:00 am-12:30 pm

Oct. 11th & 19th - Nature Journaling @ Landa Park

Study the works of nature's literary greats before venturing into the outdoors to explore the different styles of writing and compose your great masterpiece.

Nov. 8th & 16th - Astronomy 101 @ New Braunfels Pub. Library

Ever wonder how a telescope really works? Can you find the North Star? View the night sky in the Star Lab Planetarium and learn from the experts in the New Braunfels Astronomy Club.



Classes are \$5 per student/\$15 max per family. Pre-registration is required. Call or email for more information, 830-626-1776, education@ravenstaroutdoors.org.

Payment is due at time of registration. Classes with fewer than 20 students may be cancelled.



Connecting your students with nature

As always thank you for taking the time to read this little newsletter. I hope to see you in the park, on the river or anywhere else outdoors!

Sincerely,

Kelley Clifford
RavenStar Outdoor Education

Trustees

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Shannon Calder
Sandy McLemore
Pam Wille
Heather Harrison
Jennifer Singleterry

Advisors

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City of New Braunfels
McKenna Legacy Foundation
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SAM'S Distribution Center 4889
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Texas Parks & Wildlife Department
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Waste Management Incorporated
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Seguin Outdoor Learning Center
San Antonio River Authority
Gruene Lions Club
Communities in Schools of SC TX
Big Brothers Big Sisters of Comal & Guadalupe Counties
Connections Ind. & Family Services
Comal Senior Citizens' Foundation
Lindheimer Master Naturalists
Native Plant Society of Texas
New Braunfels Astronomy Club
New Braunfels Roots & Shoots
Boy Scouts of America, Troop #133
VFW Post 7110
New Braunfels Public Library
Tye Preston Memorial Library
Community Resource & Recreation Center of Canyon Lake

"Never doubt that a small band of committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, nothing else ever has."

Margaret Mead