

Brack Pack

NEWSLETTER

Brackenridge Park Conservancy

October 2022

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Your gift supports the BPC mission to protect, restore, and preserve Brackenridge Park.

BPC Announces New CEO

The Brackenridge Park Conservancy is pleased to announce the appointment of Talli Dolge as chief executive officer.

Talli joins BPC with extensive experience in leadership in nonprofit organizations. She previously served as the CEO of the Jewish Family Service of San Antonio, a nonprofit that promotes mental health for people of all faiths. As a strong advocate for mental health awareness, in 2019 she led a group of nonprofits to create the San Antonio Mobile Mental Wellness Collaborative, a program that brings mental wellness services directly into school districts.



“I could not be more excited to take on the role of CEO of the Brackenridge Park Conservancy,” Talli said. “The Park holds incredible history and memories for so many in San Antonio. I cannot wait to see how we can bring this San Antonio treasure to everyone who lives, visits, or even hears about our beautiful city. Brackenridge Park is at a pivotal time of restoration, growth, and change. I feel honored to be a part of this historical change.”

“We are delighted to have Talli join us,” said Board Chair Nick Hollis. “A unanimous choice of our search committee, Talli exhibits drive, determination, and boundless energy--traits that will serve all the citizens of San Antonio as we revitalize our cherished Park.”

Family Fishing Experience

From 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 22, come join us for the Family Fishing Experience, a



fun, family-friendly, and free event with educational booths, food trucks, and more!

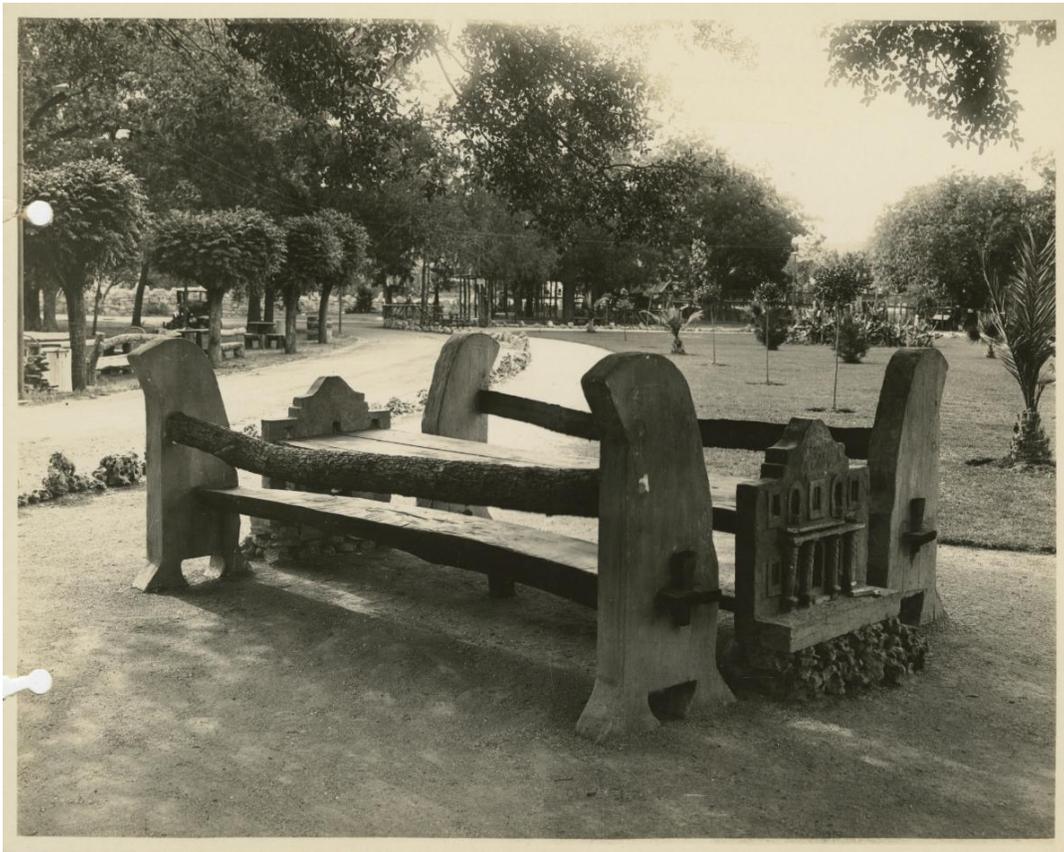
More than 600 12-inch native catfish will be released into the San Antonio River in Brackenridge Park across from the Joske Pavilion.

To pre-register for free fishing and conservation education for ages 5-16, go to finaddictangler.org website. Registration will be open the day of the event from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Those who just want to fish may go anywhere along the river and drop a line. The Texas Parks & Wildlife Department will waive the fishing license requirement for the event.

This event is co-sponsored by the San Antonio Parks & Recreation, TPWD, San Antonio River Authority, and Fin Addict Angler Foundation.

Witte Hosts Brackenridge Park Exhibit



In connection with the release of Lewis F. Fisher's new book, *"Brackenridge: San Antonio's Acclaimed Urban Park"*, the Witte Museum will host an exhibition that explores the story of the remarkable area now known as Brackenridge Park and how it has changed over time and become the Park we know today.

The exhibit will run from Oct. 22 to March 20 in the Laura and Sam Dawson Gallery and is included in museum admission.

Brackenridge Park's 400+ acres hold evidence of generations of inhabitants and people passing through, drawn to the life-giving springs and river. Even the environment is a place of confluence, where the Edwards Plateau, Central Prairie, and South Texas Plains ecoregions meet.

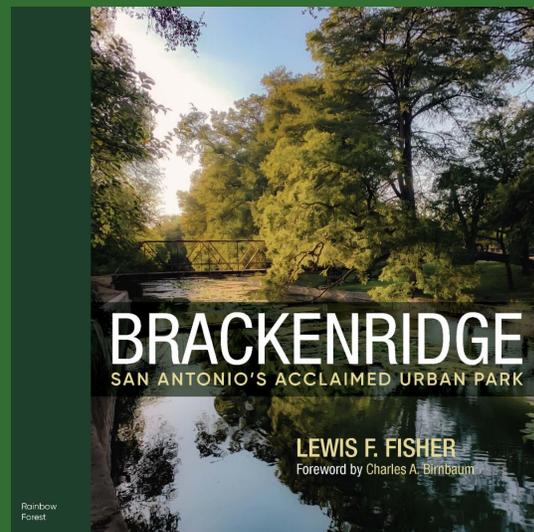
Artifacts tell the rich history of the area, from the 10,300-year-old stone projectile points to 20th-century plaster studies for Mount Rushmore created by artist Gutzon Borglum in his Park studio.

Explore these as you view maps and photos showing the evolution of the Park, and learn about the establishment of the Park, the plants and animals that call it home, the people who have shaped it, and how our beloved Park features have changed over time.

Order your copy today!

"Brackenridge: San Antonio's Acclaimed Urban Park", the latest book by San Antonio author Lewis F. Fisher, is extensively researched and illustrated with more than 200 archival photographs and vintage postcards.

This book is the first comprehensive look at the fascinating story of Brackenridge Park, one of the most culturally significant urban public parks in the U.S. and how its diverse layers evolved to create one of our city's foremost gathering places.



"Brackenridge" is
the perfect gift for
those love this Park.

"Brackenridge: San Antonio's Acclaimed Urban Park" was underwritten through the generous gift from the Semmes Foundation.

Commissioned by the Brackenridge Park Conservancy and published by Trinity University Press.

Why Things Are

Upper Labor Dam & Acequia



The Brackenridge Park landscape was largely defined by the presence of the San Antonio River running through its center, the Acequia Madre de Valero to the east, and the Upper Labor Acequia to the west—each serving as irrigation corridors.



The Madre de Valero acequia (left) was first constructed in 1719, beginning in today's Brackenridge Park near the Witte Museum.

Between 1776 and 1778, the Upper Labor Acequia (top) was constructed and “twenty-six long, narrow parcels (suertes) running from the acequia to the river were awarded to those who financed the ditch.” At its completion, “there were over 50 miles of acequia ditches in San Antonio that served the missions, the secular settlement of Béxar, and the military presidio”.

Remnants are visible today in Brackenridge Park in the San Antonio Zoo, although they are not interpreted for the public. A portion of the acequia is also visible in Davis Park, suggesting that it ran the length of present-day Brackenridge Park's western boundary.

Charles Porter Jr. wrote that the “distribution of the water via acequias sowed the first seed of sustainable life for the settlement”

and that “San Antonio would never have become a major community without its irrigation system to distribute water resources.”



Upper Labor Dam

The acequias were the predecessor of a system of dams and ditches that would continue to be carved out of the river.

In addition to providing irrigation, San Antonio’s acequia system “distributed water for all uses by all the settlers, including personal consumption and other household use. It can therefore be said to have been the first municipal water system in the United States, preceding a public water system dating to 1754 in Bethlehem, Pa., which is typically cited as the country’s earliest public water system.”

Sources: Brackenridge Park Cultural Landscape Report and National Register of Historic Places



Choose Brackenridge Park Conservancy as your charitable organization, and make your Amazon purchases through smile.amazon.com. Amazon will then donate 0.5% of the price of your eligible purchases to the BPC.

OUR MISSION

The Brackenridge Park Conservancy is a steward of and an advocate for the Park and an instrument for preserving and enhancing the Park’s natural, historic, educational, and recreational resources for the enjoyment of current and future generations.

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