



Bear Briefs

The Newsletter of the Heart Of Texas Bears

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JANUARY 2007

From the President's Desk



I am such a good president. I may not be the brightest bulb in the marquee but I have heart and nine times out of ten, I try my best. And I am very modest!

I had a great Christmas and I have all of you that brought a teddy bear or stuffed animal to the Christmas party to thank. It put me in the spirit of the season but not right away.

The charity we had decided on did not return my phone calls and the second one returned my call but basically told me "thanks but no thanks". Well, this was not acceptable and I refused to throw them in the back of the truck and haul them off to some warehouse. I just wanted to be able to tell you that your kindness was appreciated and that the little stuffed critters went to a good home and they did.

I did a web search and got in contact with the fine folks at Hill Country Children's Advocacy Center in Burnet, Texas. They were overjoyed.

With the bear that had the leather jacket and goggles one of you donated acting as copilot I loaded the stuffed animals into the truck for an hour drive though the hill country to the town of Burnet. All I can say is I have no idea how so much positive energy can radiate from a place that helps abused children and the women I met are surely angels. I can only imagine the good it must do a child's soul to reach this safe haven.

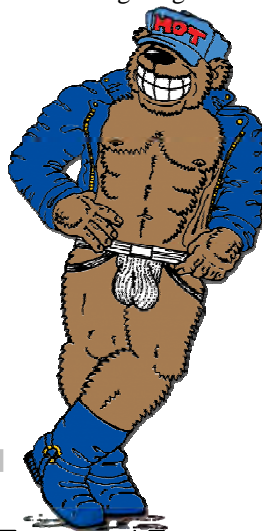
Of course it dredged up some bad memories from my own childhood but as I drove back to Austin I remembered a conversation I had with one of my sisters about our lovely parents. I told her we will always have those bad memories, the key is not to replay them over and over. Accept that they are a part of who you are and learn to love yourself. What happened was not our fault. Forgive but never forget.

You guys have taught me a lot about random acts of kindness and about giving back. Thank you.

Hugs, Ed Burleson

January Birthday Bears

Steve Rison	1/2	Lance Blankenship ...	1/22
Michael Roberson	1/13	Gary Rogers	1/23
Robert Logan	1/13	Robert Lightner	1/23
Ervin Knezek	1/19	Ron Sheaffer	1/24
Peter Reid	1/19	Michael Rowley	1/25



Sunday, January 14
Quarterly Business Meeting
at a new location - see page 2

Sponsors

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ChadCardani.com

Wyndham Garden Hotel

— Austin

3401 South I-35 (78741)

(512) 448-2444

WoodwardAustin.com

Upcoming Events

Saturday, January 6

Bears Day Out breakfast at 10am at **Trudy's North Star Restaurant & Bar**, 8820 Burnet Road, Austin, TX 78757, (512) 454-1474. Join us at Trudy's for their great breakfast buffet!

Sunday, January 14

The **HOT Bears Quarterly Business Meeting** will be at **1pm** at the **Wyndham Garden Hotel – Austin** (formerly named The Woodward Hotel). The Wyndham Garden is located on I-35 at the Woodward exit. Their address is 3401 South I-35 (78741) and their phone number is 512-448-2444. They are a HOT Bears sponsor and are providing us a meeting room for our Quarterly Meetings. Join us, hear about upcoming club events, and share your ideas! Remember, it's **your** club. Bear Beer Bust will follow the meeting at the Chain Drive.

Sunday, January 14

Monthly Bear Beer Bust at the Chain Drive (504 Willow Drive, Austin, TX 78701) from **4pm — 8pm**. Join the Bears

for **\$0.50** draft beer. Come on down and end your weekend enjoying the afternoon with your Bear Brothers.

Wednesday, January 17

Coffee With Da' Bears! Join your Bear Brothers for some friendship, fun, and caffeine. This month we are going downtown to Whole Foods Downtown, at 5th and Lamar. Whole Foods has a coffee bar, as well as multiple food bars and great groceries. Enjoy a cup of java and a snack! See you there at 7pm.

Friday — Sunday, January 19 – 21

TCC Activity Weekend. Come up to the TCC Landsite at Buzzards' Peak, camp out, and help with projects. It's a great weekend get-away and you can help improve the landsite. This month is also the TCC quarterly business meeting, which includes the annual elections.

Saturday, January 20

2nd Bear Breakfast at 10am at **Austin Diner**, 5408 Burnet Road, Austin 78756, (512) 467-9552. This "2nd breakfast" for

the month has become pretty popular. Join us for some great breakfast cooking and lots of Bear Brotherhood!

Thursday, January 25

This month for "Bears Night Out" we're going north. Join us at 7pm at **Mesa Hills Café**. They are located just west of MoPac at 3435 Greystone Drive, Suite 112, Austin, 78731. Their phone number is 345-7423.

Sunday, January 28

HOT Bear Fur Frenzy. Join us from **4pm — 8pm** at **The Cockpit Club** (2nd and San Jacinto). We'll be serving 50¢ beer on the back patio with plenty of Bear Brotherhood.

Saturday, February 3

Bears Day Out breakfast at 10am at **Trudy's North Star Restaurant & Bar**.



**Pictures
from
the
HOT
Bears
Xmas
Party**





Orion and Me

I Love My Age

I celebrate 44 years of age on the 19th this month. So, at this time of year, I always take stock of where I have been and where I am going in the future. Reflecting back, I have a lot to be thankful for. One of them is the

company of Orion. As I drove across the Texas border for the first time three years ago this February, he must have spotted me through my windshield as I entered into a new beginning and life here. However, I did not notice him at the time.

Looking Back

In mid-2003, I decided that I had enough of New York City. So, I landed a job in Austin and left New York in a snowstorm on my birthday in 2004. After a long road trip, towing most everything I owned in a small U-Haul trailer behind my equally small Rav4, I crossed the border on January 31. The plan was to get to Austin by February 1 and move into a new home in the northeast part of town. I knew not a soul in the state, so I had found a small room in a house to rent via the internet. Since I had no place to stay until then and it was getting late, I decided to stay overnight in Waco. I found a nice hotel downtown, checked in, and asked where the gay bar was. It was a short walk from the hotel, so I walked outside in the evening after dinner.

The First Time

The stars were out. Orion was clearly visible above the river and accompanied me on my six block journey to a tiny gay space. It was the first time I saw him. In New York, not many stars were visible due to the city light pollution. But, there he was, following me on my way to a gay bar in Waco. The bar was packed with the "Friday Freakshow" as the bartender called it: drag queens with big hair, tattooed ex-cons, businessmen in suits, cowboys in hats, students with piercings, a huge group of lesbians dressed to the nines in cowgirl outfits, another group of women in biker gear, and of course, a few bears tossed into the mix. I loved it, and hoped that Austin was as wacky as Waco. I walked from the bar after closing and Orion followed me back to the hotel, watching over me until the morning.

I have not been disappointed in my expectations of Austin. This city is filled with great people and has already given me great memories and introduced me to some of the best friends I have ever had. I met many of them via the Heart of Texas Bears, while I met others through the Texas Conference of Clubs. Orion has been with me the whole time as a constant reminder of my arrival in Texas.

Always There

Later, when I moved from my tiny room and rented a one bedroom in Northwest Austin, Orion could be seen clearly outside of my living room window. His belt comprised of three dots can be seen wherever I am. At the TCC campground, he is clearly visible over the kitchen, just above the tree line. He shares my campfire and has ridden over many great evenings of camaraderie at Back to the Woods, as well as the other runs. He was there when I built my tiny cabin against the hill and guided me as I lit candles to mark the path up to it. He has shared a drink or cigar while I gathered with friends beneath the trees.

He followed me to Montana this year on my annual Christmas road trip to the snow. When I was thinking about home, I looked up and there he was. His sword was clearly visible as were the four points marking his legs and arms drawing a bow. The reflection of the moon off snow of the mountains was not bright enough to keep him from showing his stuff in the sky.

When I visited family last summer on Cape Cod, he was lower in the sky. He was hard to make out, but I searched for him while swimming in the cool salt waters of Bass River at night. There he was, poking out just above the marshes; reminding me again of my new home and the friends I have made over the last three years.

Slow Down, Look Up

Orion rides in the northeast sky. Look for him or find your own constellation to keep you company while you travel. It helps you remember your own family- either by blood, association, or partnership- and will always keep you company as you move through your temporary stay here below.

Peace.
-Peter

January

www.HeartOfTexasBears.org

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
31 New Years Eve TCC – Fire & Ice	1 New Years Day TCC – Fire & Ice	2	3 7:30p: HOT Board Meeting – South	4	5	6 10a: Bears Day Out Breakfast Trudy's North Star, 8820 Burnet Road, Austin, TX, 78757 (512) 454-1474
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14 1p: Quarterly Membership Meeting at The Wyndham Garden 4-8p: Bear Bust The Chain Drive 504 Willow Street Austin, TX 78701 (512) 480-9017	15	16	17 7p: Bear Coffee Whole Foods Market 525 N. Lamar Austin, 78703 (512) 476-1206	18	19 TCC Activity Weekend	20 TCC Activity Weekend 1p: TCC Winter Mtg TCC Landsite 10a: 2nd Breakfast Austin Diner 5408 Burnet Road Austin, TX, 78756 (512) 467-9552
21 TCC Activity Weekend	22	23	24	25 7p: Bears Night Out Mesa Hills Café 3435 Greystone Dr. #112 Austin, TX, 78731-2363 (512) 345-7423	26	27
28 4p-8p: Fur Frenzy The Cockpit 113 San Jacinto Austin, TX, 78701 (512) 457-8010	29	30	31	The Wyndham Garden Hotel – Austin (formerly named The Woodward Hotel & Conference Center) (512) 448-2444 3401 S. I-35 (S. I-35 & Woodward St.), Austin, TX 78741 The Chain Drive – 504 Willow St., Austin, TX, 78701 (512) 480-9017		

View the latest calendar information for this month and future months on the HOT Bears web site

2007