



Bayou Foliage

Vol. 13 No. 4 Apr. 1995

A PUBLICATION OF THE ARMAND BAYOU NATURE CENTER VOLUNTEERS

"INTERESTED + INFORMED + INVOLVED"

APRIL CALENDAR

- Apr. 1 Stewardship work party, 8:00 a.m.
- Apr. 6 Volunteer Board Meeting, 6:30 p.m.
- Apr. 8-9 **WILDFLOWER WEEKEND**
- Apr. 8 **GARDEN TOUR**
- Apr. 13 Volunteer Meeting, 6:30 p.m.
- Apr. 15 *Bayou Foliage* deadline
- Apr. 19 Fall Festival Planning Committee meeting, 6:30 p.m.
- Apr. 22 **EARTH DAY**, 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.
- Apr. 22 Stewardship work party, 8:00 a.m.
- Apr. 22 Farm Garden work party, 9:00 a.m.

FEBRUARY VOLUNTEER OF THE MONTH

The Volunteer of the Month for January is Gib Harper. Gib has been a volunteer for about three years. He puts in most of his volunteer hours teaching weekday children's classes, both trail and farm. He says he became a volunteer because he like the out-of-doors and nature. He enjoys "sharing the little I know with those who may not know it." The children who visit ABNC surely appreciate Gib's efforts and so do we.

Thanks, Gib, you and all the weekday teachers do a terrific job.

GARDEN TOUR HELPERS NEEDED!

ABNC's first garden tour is Saturday, April 8 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. at ten Clear Lake area private homes. Volunteer help is needed to "man" the gardens and welcome the public at each home. If you can help, please call Phyllis Louderback or Barb Hill. They will appreciate all the help they can get. This is a BIG operation.

APRIL ABNCV MEETING

THURSDAY, MARCH 13

- 6:30 - Snacks and Conversation - Mixer - Get to know one another
- 7:00 - Program - Randy McLean - "Formation of the Martyn Farm and Why"
- 8:00 - Business Meeting
- 9:00 - Adjourn

Some of our members remember Randy McLean, ABNC's Farm Manager from 1982 to 1989. At our April meeting he will present a program on the creation of ABNC's farm and why. Those who were volunteers during his tenure at the nature center will remember Randy as a lively and interesting speaker. Through slides and his narrative he will take us back to the farm's beginning. He knows, because he was there almost from the start! This program will count as continuing education.

Pat

A NOTE FROM THE CHAIR

I was overwhelmed by the large turnout at the March Volunteer Meeting. Over 70 folks showed up for Dr. Godwin's presentation and the new volunteer graduation. It was literally standing room only! I hope we all can keep having large turnouts like this. The monthly volunteer meeting is one of the few times we can all get together as a group and have time visiting and getting to know one another. Also, the presentations serve to broaden each of our minds and we are able to learn more about nature, the environment, and how we can help preserve and restore a part of the land to its natural state and can then pass this knowledge on to the public. Finally, the business portion of the meeting allows us all to be a part of running the volunteer organization and in keeping informed on what is happening. Now I challenge you all to see if we can set another attendance record at this month's volunteer meeting - don't miss it!!!!

Lou

HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

- | | |
|----------------|---------|
| Rob Thornton | Apr. 4 |
| Gennie Vantino | Apr. 5 |
| David Abuisi | Apr. 8 |
| Larry Veale | Apr. 10 |
| Becky Herder | Apr. 14 |
| Suzi Howe | Apr. 15 |
| Jim Hawkins | Apr. 16 |
| Beverly Dement | Apr. 23 |
| Judy Mayes | Apr. 27 |

MINUTES

Dr. Tom Godwin, the veterinarian who owns the cattle being grazed on ABNC property, presented a program on "Management of Prairie Ecosystems Utilizing Grazing, Burning, and Selected Herbicide Application." All volunteers in attendance earned one hour of continuing education credit and enjoyed a very interesting talk.

We, then, presented badges to 35 new volunteers who had attended an intensive training program during the month of February. The rest of the volunteers are looking forward to working with these graduates.

Lou Wheatcraft, Chair, called the business meeting to order at 8:20 p.m. The February volunteer meeting minutes were approved as printed in the *Bayou Foliage*. Harvey Louderback, treasurer, reported \$563.96 in savings and \$1780.69 in checking for a total of \$2344.65.

Tom Scarsella, Stewardship Coordinator, invited everyone interested in stewardship projects to join him on the 3rd Saturday of each month at 8:30 a.m. in the parking lot. From there, they will go to their work site. Then, around 12:30 p.m. the Stewardship Committee will meet in the break room to plan future activities. The project for March will be marsh restoration, so workers can plan on getting wet. In addition to the regular meeting, this month will include the Texas Trash Bash on Mar. 25. Participants will meet at Bay Area Park at 8:30 a.m. with canoes to clean up the bayou.

Barbara Hill reported on the progress being made on plans for the Garden Tour which will be held on April 8, in conjunction with ABNC's Wildflower Weekend. She asked for volunteers who will be stationed at one of the ten gardens on the tour. She passed out flyers and maps to help advertise the event, and she asked for volunteers to help sell tickets. We hope this new event, being organized by the volunteers to benefit ABNC, will get enthusiastic support from lots of volunteers and the community.

Michael Vu & Jonathan Perez, Earth Day Co-chairs, reported that they have lots of organizations participating in Earth Day and lots of activities planned. The date for the event is April 22 from 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. and they hope that all the volunteers who are available, will help make the day a success.

Lou Wheatcraft said that March is Buddy Month for the new volunteers and asked us all to help them and make them feel welcome.

Melanie Weisman, Weekend Trail Coordinator, announced that in April we will try to go back to 3 trail tours every weekend. She would like volunteers to call her if they are interested in leading a hike.

Lou Wheatcraft reminded everyone of the following committees meeting in March: Fall Festival Committee, Stewardship Committee, Communications Committee -- Distribution Group Meeting, and the

Interpretive Materials Development Committee. He also reminded all of us to turn in our Volunteer Interest Inventories.

Lou had a special thank you to Jane Bingel and Kathleen Crabb for their work in the farm yard garden, and another special thank you to Jim Edwards for his work in installing our new telescope.

Paula Kennedy, Co-chair Communications Committee, is looking for a volunteer to take over publishing the *Bayou Foliage*.

Stephania Rogers, Co-chair Ways and Means Committee, asked for volunteers to bake cookies for Wildflower Weekend, April 8, and Earth Day, April 22. Harvey Louderback said that last year the volunteers earned \$1000 for our organization from our cookie sales and made it possible for our volunteer group to fund special projects at ABNC. Last year we purchased the carpet for the auditorium which is now an important money maker for ABNC through its rental.

Bill Howe reminded everyone that the video from last year's Fall Festival is still available for \$10.00 from Cherished Moments. Bill is taking orders.

Harvey Louderback announced that the volunteer trip to Concan and the Frio Bat Cave has only 6 spaces left. The reservation fee is \$25.00 and the total cost is \$175.00.

George Regmund, Director, announced that Gib Harper is February's Volunteer of the Month. Congratulations, Gib.

Lou made a correction on parking in the back - Please do not park in back for Volunteer Meetings. He also asked that when we are speaking to the public in an official capacity, to please not contradict Nature Center policies. He also asked that when scheduling activities at the Nature Center, to make sure the activity is approved by a staff member and is entered into the "Big Book."

The next volunteer meeting will be April 13th at 6:30 p.m. The program will be Randy McLean, former farm manager at ABNC. His topic will be "Formation of the Martyn Farm and Why". The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 pm.

Anne Tincher, Secretary

TELL YOUR FRIENDS: EARTH DAY is APRIL 22:

Pontoon Boat Rides (\$5)
Environmental Booths
Green Living Demos
Trail Hikes

Recyclables Drop-Off
Nature Demos
Children's Crafts
Cookies!

ANNOUNCEMENTS

FULL TRAIL TOUR SCHEDULE

As was stated last month, in April we will be going back to 3 trail tours every weekend. Some of the regular trail tour volunteers have gotten involved in other activities when the number of trail tours were decreased. Now that we are going back to the old schedule we need your help again. The best thing for you all to do is to make a commitment to lead a trail tour the same day and time each month. This is a big task in that besides the regular trail tours, we need volunteers to lead night hikes and to lead special trail tours. Because of this we need a pool of 25 to 30 volunteers that Melanie can rely on. Please call Melanie and let her know that you would be willing to conduct one or more trail tours per month and when and what time slot you would like. This way you can do what you want when you want to.

Many people show up wanting a tour and we should be able to meet their expectations. This is a great opportunity to interpret our three ecosystems to them first hand and in the past this has also proven to be a great way to get new members and new volunteers.

Lou

SCHEDULING ACTIVITIES

The Nature Center has many activities going on - on almost a daily basis. This includes renting out the auditorium, having weddings at the farm, as well as after-school classes, special workshops, volunteer meetings of various kinds, etc. Because of this it is very important that any group activity you want to schedule must be coordinated with a staff member (especially if you want that staff member to support your activity) AND scheduled in the "Big Book" by Marsha. This will ensure there are no conflicts and the proper folks can attend/participate in your activity. This is especially important if you plan to have a meeting, etc. after hours and need a staff member to work late to keep the building open and to lock up afterwards. Thanks in advance.

KHAKI SHIRTS PLEASE

Experienced volunteers, please remember George's request for us to wear button-front khaki shirts when interacting with the public. This gives us a professional look and immediately lets the visitors know we are someone to whom they may turn for help or information. At the recent volunteer training all new volunteers were informed of this policy and many of them have already bought a khaki shirt. Those of us who have been here a long while should be setting the example. Let us all remember to follow this directive in order to have a uniform look.

AT THE COMPOST BINS:

Thanks to Tom Scarsella for a pick-up full of "horsebarn." We can always use more! Right now the system is, as you face the bins behind the vegetable garden, manure on the left, fresh material in the middle, compost to use on the right. We layer the manure into the middle bin to speed up the composting process, or use it (when somewhat aged) as super-fertilizer.

Hilary

COOKIES PLEASE!!

We will need cookies to sell for three days in April:

April 8 and 9 are the dates for Wildflower Weekend. The 8th is also the Garden Tour.

On April 22, we plan to sell cookies during the Earth Day activities.

If you can bring cookies for either of these two events it will be greatly appreciated. Remember, this is how the volunteers earn their money for the year. Thank you.

Stephania Rogers

FARMHOUSE GARDENS LOOKING BETTER

Thanks to the efforts of many people, the farmhouse gardens are beginning to look the way they should. Stumps have disappeared, shrubs have been pruned, one huge hamelia (hummingbird bush) has been dug up, split into smaller plants and given away to eager home gardeners, while other plants including ferns and rose bushes have been transplanted.

Kathleen conferred with Mark Kramer and a tentative garden plan was discussed and begun to be implemented.

Thanks to Carolyn Collins, who donated some native plants to the gardens, we got an hour and a half of continuing education. She brought Kryz Thomas who is a rosarian working with Houston Parks and Recreation. He showed us how to prune and root-prune roses as well as how to prepare the soil and transplant roses.

So, thanks to Jimmy Crabb, Ramesh Dhanaraj, Ann Gallant, Phyllis and Harvey Louderback, Rachel Rosen, Jutta Weiss and Lou Wheatcraft for all your help and hard work.

If you couldn't come last month, come join us this month and every third Saturday of the month.

Thanks again to everyone,

Jane Bingel and Kathleen Crabb

MORE ANNOUNCEMENTS AND THANKS!

EARTHKEEPER HELP NEEDED

Attention volunteers! Are you looking for a unique and rewarding experience this summer? Along with all the other great summer programs the nature center offers, we have added an exciting new program for kids ages 9-11 brought to us by "Institute for Earth Education." The program, called Earthkeepers, was piloted here at the center last summer for the first time ever in Texas! Earthkeepers was a huge success and so we will be running it again for a week in June and July. The program offers some very unique but easy ways of teaching some difficult ecological concepts in a way that is loads of fun, but very educational too!

There is one catch though. Some of the set-up required for the activities is elaborate and takes a lot of time, planning, props and materials. We need help in all of the above! If you're interested in learning more about the program please call me at 335-0930 or leave a message with Mary Alice Trumble at the center. If you are interested in helping with some of the other summer programs and/or age groups please don't hesitate to call Mary Alice as we need all the help we can get with those too!

The following is a list of some of the materials we need for the Earthkeepers program:

- Magazine pictures of animals, insects and plants (call for an itemized list)
- Top hat
- Jude's robe (Choir robe?)
- Gavel
- White mop wig
- Large basketball-sized plaster ball with loop for hanging (the sun)
- Brown, dark blue and light blue modeling clay
- Blank postcards from all over
- Approximately 4-6 feet of macrame cord in light blue, dark blue, yellow and brown.
- Empty paper towel rolls
- Parchment paper for maps (and a map drawer)
- Scrap wood for "tombstones", signs, wooden stakes
- Fossils, fossil pictures, articles, replicas, etc. for "time capsules"
- People to work on props.

Thanks for all your help!

Joanna Wactor

STEWARDSHIP THANKS

Thanks to Roland Borey and Jim Edwards for cleaning out the lumber rack on March 18. It really needed to be done and we appreciate your giving up a beautiful day to do it.

Mark Kramer

INTEREST INVENTORIES

Attached to last month's Bayou Foliage was the 1995 Volunteer Interest Inventory. While many of you have turned in your inventories, many have not. There wasn't an interest inventory last year so it is very important that everyone fill out a new interest inventory. In addition, there have been several new activities added (Star Gazing, Girl Scout workshops, Boy Scout workshops, EcoCamp, after-school classes, etc.) as well as the deletion of some of old committees (membership, mailing, and historical) and the addition of several new committees (Communications, Stewardship, and Interpretive Materials Development). If we haven't received an interest inventory from you before or at the April volunteer meeting, then one of the volunteer board members will call you and help you fill out the inventory over the phone.

Once we have all your interest inventories and the data has been entered into the database, we will be able to sort out who is interested in what activities and supply these lists to the respective board members and committee chairs. They will in turn contact you and make sure you are able to fully participate in those areas you are most interested in. Thanks for your help.

Lou

STEWARDSHIP REPORT

The first Stewardship Saturday (The third Saturday of each month is our stewardship day) work party was spent in the marsh restoration project on the nature center's west bank. Fifteen hardy souls waded in the muck and mire to run fencing, drive poles, cut iva and drag 100 Christmas trees out into the marsh to build a wave barrier along the edge of the marsh.

Thanks to Ann Brinly, Salma Kabli, Kieth Doucet, Shawn Mazzetti, Kristin Knoedler, Warren Nepveux, Susan Helsey, Jim Callan, Jana Callan, Paul Shack and Polly Swerdlin, and a special thanks to Aaron Kramer and Sam Brinly.

The scheduled stewardship projects in April are the start of clearing of the tallow trees along the entrance road on April 1 and another work party in the marsh on April 22. Both parties meet in the ABNC parking lot at 8:00 a.m. Bring a wide-brimmed hat, work gloves and some boots to join either party. Call Tom at 483-7757 during the day for more information. You may call the center at 474-2551 and let Marsha know you're coming so we can better plan our work parties.

Thanks,

Tom Scarsella and Mark Kramer

THANKS!

THANKS TO THE GARDENERS AND THE TELESCOPE CREW

Special thanks go to Jane Bingel & Kathleen Crabb for organizing a work party for the farmhouse flower garden. Many visitors come to the farm and like to sit on the porch to admire the flowers and watch the bees, butterflies, and hummingbirds that are attracted to the flowers. Spring is a busy time for tending to the needs of all the plants, and it requires many hours of volunteer labor on a frequent basis to keep the garden looking healthy and nice. Jane and Kathleen are determined to make this happen and to this end organized a work party in March to start this process. They also had an expert gardener explain, plant by plant, the special requirements for soil, roots, etc. for each plant to grow and be healthy. If you would like to help Jane and Kathleen, give them a call and let them know. Thanks, Jane and Kathleen, for all your time and dedication.

I also want to thank Jim Edwards for all of his time and money he has put into making it possible for the telescope to be brought out to the nature center and set up. Jim is working with the Johnson Space Center Astronomy Society so that ABNC could be the new home of the Krause Observatory, a 10-1/2 inch reflecting telescope built by Gary Krause and donated by his family to the Society. Jim has worked with Society members to select the site (by the greenhouse) and to get a concrete foundation and base as well as a structure to cover the telescope when not in use. The telescope will allow us to have "Star Parties" in the near future and provides another great activity to offer to ABNC members. Thanks Jim for all your hard work -- not only your work on the telescope but for all your other stewardship help.

Lou

COOKIES COOKIES! COOKIES!!

The volunteers will be selling cookies at Wildflower Weekend, April 8 & 9 and at Earth Day, April 22. Please bake and bring all the cookies you can. This is our way of raising money for the Volunteer Organization.

So, heat up those ovens and get baking!

Call Stephania Rogers if you have any questions.

SAN ANTONIO TRIP REPORT

It was a dark and rainy afternoon on Sunday, January 29, 1995. Mary Alice Trumble gathered Hilary Gibbs and Barbara Hill in her big white van to go to the CONNECTING WITH VISITORS workshop given by Tom Ryan in San Antonio. Melanie Weisman would join us at the workshop on Monday morning. At the intersection of Bay Area Boulevard and El Camino Real several cars were heading in the wrong direction and the ambulance was also on the wrong side of the road. Visibility was bad. It was a typical Houston torrent. Mary Alice willed the van up El Camino and onto the freeway. By the other side of Houston the rain had stopped and a wisp of sunset was visible; the cool front was moving in. A stop at a handy sub shop fueled our souls for the trek ahead. I-10, as you know, is pretty much flat land. Mary Alice wrestled the van all the way to San Antonio as the wind gusts "swept across the plains."

There were 20 people at the seminar. Several representatives from the San Antonio Art Museum, as well as the Galveston County Historical Society, Corpus Christi Aquarium, Austin Nature Center and a new arboretum west of Uvalde. At that point we wished we had taken brochures to advertise ourselves a little better.

Tom Ryan, the facilitator, has had experience as a ranger at National Parks and presently teaches communications courses at a university in California.

To highlight his topics we worked in small groups. All work revolved around how the visitors perceive the information that you provide to them. All very thought provoking. Mr. Ryan is available at a set fee. We talked about setting up one of his workshops as a fund raiser for ABNC. Think about an organization that you work with that might benefit from this type of seminar. Good communication is key to all action. Consider the children's game of gossip and how quickly information can be distorted. If we just had a few more months in the year perhaps we could squeeze in a seminar such as this. At a later date we may regale you with excerpts from the program.

After a lovely lunch at LaMadeleine's, home we came. The ride each way afforded time to visit with each other and get to know each other much better. The weather was one of those perfect days, temps cool, a great sweater day, sky clear blue -- what better place to live?

There were a lot of visible birds. I believe we saw some sandhill cranes, hawks of course, and a large, electric-white headed bird on the top of a tree that had to be a Bald Eagle.

The perfect end to our adventure!

Thank you, Volunteer Organization for providing the opportunity to attend this seminar.

Barb Hill

REPTILE HANDLING FOR CLASSES AND DEMOS

5 Basic Rules for Handling Animals (Be S.H.A.R.P. Think safety first.)

1. Support
2. Head away (from public)
3. Awareness/knowledge
 - a. Be aware where public is. Make sure you have a barrier behind you.
 - b. Have information about the animal you are holding.
4. Restrain -- Make sure you have a secure hold on animal. You do not want animal getting away from you.
5. Natural Plane -- Hold all animals on their natural plane.
Examples: Turtles/tortoises feet facing floor. Never turn upside down. Snakes don't belong around your neck.

Stress to public:

These are **NOT** pets. They are wild animals and are used for educational purposes. It is okay to touch a snake at the nature center, but not in the wild.

All animals have a mouth and can bite.

Never insist that anyone touch an animal.

Never use a pet. These animals that we demonstrate are not pets. They are wild animals that people may touch.

When demonstrating an animal -- remember:

1. Hold the animal on its natural plane.
2. Never allow anyone else to hold the animal.
3. Remember the word is touch, not pet. People do not touch the head. They should always touch the animal from front to back (the way hair, scales, fur grow.)
4. When doing a weekend demonstration using a snake, turtle, or alligator, don't hold the same animal the entire time. An animal should only be held for 30-35 minutes at a time, then rested before handling again.
5. If by chance, you are handling different types of animals (i.e. snake, rat) and can't wash your hands in between, always handle predator (snake) first. Remember also that animal smells will linger on your clothes and this can effect animal behavior.
6. Don't wear perfume, cologne or jewelry.

TURTLES

Hold on sides and let public touch their shells. Do not turn upside down.

SNAKES

Small snakes can be held on one hand and arm while holding head with other hand away from public.

Large snakes will do better if you sit down with snake in your lap holding its head.

ALLIGATORS

Place hand underneath head holding mouth on each side. Hold firmly, but not too tight. Its body should be on your arm with legs on each side of arm. The tail should be between your arm and body.

DON'T LEAVE ANIMAL UNATTENDED.

REMEMBER SAFETY FIRST
Public, animal, handler

VOLUNTEER DUTY SCHEDULE

DATE	11:00 TRAIL	2:00 TRAIL	INFO. SERVICES	FARM DEMO	NAT. HIST. DEMO	FARM INTERP.	CLOSE
Sat. 4/1	Pat Doerr	Al Stock		Jane Bingel - Ropemaking	Ruby Dilgren - Alligators	P. & V. Greenfield	----
Sun. 4/2	-----	Becky Brignac		Paula Kennedy - Pysnaky Egg Decorating	Martha Munies - Geology of Texas		----
Sat 4/8	Jim Crabb	Lou Wheatcraft	Pat Doerr	Julie Bannerman - Butter Churning	WILDFLOWER WKND: Marilyn Clark - Hummingbirds Karen Lon - Wildflower ID Jennie Plunkett - Wildflower ID (in A.M.)		----
Sun 4/9	-----	Bob Arnette		Jane Bingel - Ropemaking	WILDFLOWER WKND: Barb Hill - Pollinators Phyllis Louderback - Wildflower ID	Penny Woodward	----
Sat 4/15	John Siptak	Anne Tincher		Paul & Stephania Rogers - Wash Day	Michael Vu - Fishes of Texas	Jane Bingel	----
Sun 4/16	-----	Melanie Weisman	Wanda Hayden	Tom Scarsella - Wooden Birdhouses	Bob Smither - Turtles	Larry Gorden	----
Sat 4/22	EARTH DAY	EARTH DAY	Joan Shack	Chris Bingham - Cheesemaking (2 & 3 p.m.)	EARTH DAY -	Marjorie Borey & Carol Toole	----
Sun 4/23	-----	Joe Bryan	Mary Barton	Joanna Wactor - Drop Spindle Spinning	Eldine Owens - Snakes		----
Sat 4/29	Susan Hesley	David Heise		Irene Ward - Stove or Butter	Bob & Laura Hendrix - Birdwatching	Paula Thorson	----
Sun 4/30	-----	Al Stock		Robin Sneed - Needlework	Helen Harger - Feathers		----

IF YOU CAN FILL IN ANY OF THE BLANK SPOTS, PLEASE CALL THE APPROPRIATE COORDINATOR. THANKS!

Michael Vu will be covering admissions on Sunday evenings until further notice.

VOLUNTEER BOARD FOR 1995

	Home	Office	Home	Office
Lou Wheatcraft	486-9481	244-8536	Hilary Gibbs	Weekend Demos 326-6330
Pat Doerr	538-1800	280-2136	Melanie Weisman	Weekend Trail 488-7342
Anne Tincher	486-5167		Ed Adams	Weekday Trail 946-2754
Harvey Louderback	488-7884	335-1668	Chris Bingham	Weekday Farm 538-2085
Tom Scarsella	532-1192	483-7757	Paula Kennedy	Newsletter 479-7615
Eldine Owens	486-7524			
Jane Bingel	554-5069			