



Bayou Foliage

Volume 15 No. 2 February 1997

A publication of the Armand Bayou Nature Center Volunteers

"Interested + Informed + Involved"

FEBRUARY CALENDAR

- Feb. 2 Earth Day Meeting 12:00
- 2 Volunteer Retention Comm. 2:00
- 2 Volunteer Board Meeting 4:00 (time change)
- 13 Volunteer Meeting 6:30 - 9:00
- 15 Bayou Foliage Inputs Due
- 15 RSVP Deadline for West Bank Camp Out
- 15 Stewardship Saturday
- 16 "Build a Better Birdhouse" Entry Deadline
- 22 & 23 Warm and Fuzzy Weekend
- 22 - 23 Annual West Bank Camp Out

DECEMBER VOLUNTEER OF THE MONTH

The volunteer of the month for December is **CHUCK SNYDER**. Chuck just trained as an ABNC volunteer in the spring of 1996. He jumped right in and began working on stewardship projects and helping at major events. He says he became a volunteer because he "always had a lot of interest in nature and the outdoors. I saw the ad in the newspaper and said "I've been a member for a long time, so why don't I give it a try." When asked why he likes being a volunteer Chuck said, "I feel like I'm accomplishing something. I feel like I'm contributing to our environment. It's a heck of a lot of fun because it's such a great group of people...I hope to branch out and do more in 1997."

Thanks, Chuck. We know you'll do a great job in whatever area you decide to "branch out" to.

Thank you Hoechst Celanese for providing printing of the Bayou Foliage

FEBRUARY ABNCV MEETING Thursday February 13

- 6:30 Snacks & Conversation-Get better acquainted
- 7:00 Program: Kim Walker on Oiled Wildlife Rehabilitation
- 8:00 Business Meeting
- 9:00 Adjourn

Kim Walker of Wildlife Rehab & Education, Inc., will give a presentation on the dangers of oil on wildlife, oiled wildlife response measures, the people and laws involved, and more.

FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS

Kathleen Crabb	2/1	Jackie Lafon	2/2
Patricia Martin	2/7	Ebby Creden	2/10
Vicki Forsyth	2/11	Judy Bouma	2/11
Jackie Corbett	2/14	Paul Rogers	2/15
Stephania Rogers	2/17	Ed Adams	2/18
Ray Parker	2/19	Art Adair	2/21
Chris Blingham	2/22	Mark Kramer	2/25
Hanna Drago	2/26	Gary Dinsmore	2/27
Lu Skillern	2/28		

Volunteer Picnic

The annual volunteer picnic has been moved to April 26th. We thought it might be more enjoyable in April instead of in the July heat. Mark your calendars now. Watch for more info in future newsletters.

Thanks

Bill and Suzi Howi have made a donation to ABNC Volunteers in honor of Mary Ann Tucker. She lettered a shingle for Bill to present to a fellow employee who had donated the cedar we use for shingles. She is a talented artist and a great volunteer. Thanks Mary Ann, and thanks Bill and Suzi.

Helen

Roster Changes

Phyllis Molnar
1222 Bluebonnet Dr
Seabrook TX 77586-4722

**MINUTES OF THE ABNCV MEETING
THURSDAY, JANUARY 9, 1997**

COMMENTS FROM THE CHAIR

The annual Volunteer Appreciation Dinner was held prior to the business meeting. Afterward, volunteer chair Helen Burton called the meeting to order, thanked outgoing board members, and introduced the new and continuing board members. Next, the minutes of the December meeting were approved, and the treasurer's report was given by Carol MacGregor. The balance in the checking and savings accounts was \$2,603.86. The annual audit of the volunteer accounts will be conducted by Lou Wheatcraft, Carol MacGregor, Christine Barrett, and Helen Burton. Helen announced that a mentor program is being planned and it is hoped that it will encourage more involvement by new volunteers. She also reported that a new form has been prepared for recording volunteer hours.

Stewardship Coordinator Jim Hawkins told the volunteers that he would like to organize the many upcoming stewardship activities into interest-area focus groups, with leaders in each area. Mark announced that the third Saturday of each month will continue to be Stewardship Saturday and that in January that will also be the day of the annual ABNC Members Meeting. Vice Chair Becky Brignac reported on upcoming speakers and on a March campout which will be for women only.

In her staff report, Mary Alice Trumble asked for help from volunteers in conducting Girl Scout badge workshops. Suzi Howe reminded those present that January 18 is the Members Meeting. Barb Hill announced that volunteers from ABNC will again staff a booth at the Houston Home and Garden Show. Mark Kramer thanked Tom Scarsella for the contributions he made as Stewardship Coordinator for the last two years.

Next, George Regmund reported that the December Volunteer of the Month was Chuck Snyder. Mary Alice thanked all the volunteers for their efforts and recognized their work in order of hours recorded. George also thanked the entire group and then announced the names of Volunteers of the Year, Ann Brinly and Herman Burton.

**Susan Williams
Secretary**

IT'S A BOY!

Congratulations to staff member, Lorenzo Gallardo, and his wife, Dee on the birth of their son, Jacob Leonardo. This long-awaited addition to their family arrived at 6:35 pm on Sunday, January 12th. Jacob weighed in at 8 lbs 7 oz and is 20 1/4" long. We understand Mother and son are doing great and Dad is holding up well, too. We wish all of you the best and know that Jacob will be a joy in your life.

My first comments as the new chair of the Volunteer Board at ABNC are to review the purpose and objectives of ABNC and show how volunteers are helping meet those objectives. I will look at a different activity each month.

But first, the purpose and objectives as stated in the ABNC bylaws:

Purpose: The purpose of the corporation is to maintain a conservation and education center within the County of Harris, State of Texas. This center will be maintained for the preservation of the wilderness areas under the jurisdiction of Armand Bayou Nature Center and to encourage wilderness preservation through environmental education programs and interpretation. The Armand Bayou Nature Center, Inc. (ABNC) is a not-for-profit institution organized for purposes as defined within the meaning of Section 501 (c) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954.

Objectives:

- a. Develop and present natural history and conservation education programs in cooperation with schools, colleges, youth groups and adult organizations which will promote an understanding and appreciation of natural resources.
- b. Cooperate with national, state, county, municipal and private resource agencies in providing an outdoor laboratory in which to identify natural resource problems and demonstrate management techniques.
- c. Provide opportunities for individual and family pursuit of hobby or more serious interest in natural resources.
- d. Provide trails and facilities so that individuals and groups may visit the center for the recreation and enjoyment of being in the outdoors.
- e. Provide appropriate and planned stewardship management for the land under the Nature Center's protection.
- f. Seek, where feasible, the acquisition of additional lands which may be preserved through the Nature Center's stewardship development practices.

One way the volunteers helped meet the objectives of ABNC in December was by deliberately setting and controlling fires in the prairie. These burns are a tool in the restoration of the tall grass prairie. There were three burns at ABNC that burned about 25 acres over two days. These burns are labor intensive. It took 25 volunteers to help with these burns on the two days of burning. The goal is to have a burn weekly. If you are interested in participating call Mark at ABNC.

Helen

BEST WISHES

Our thoughts and prayers are with Pat Doerr who had surgery in December and will be undergoing further medical treatments.

1996 VOLUNTEER HOURS AUDIT

Following are the results of the audit of the volunteer hours for 1996. What a year - over 13,000 hours were recorded! And what a difference all the volunteers have made too.

Worked Over 1200 Hours Paula Kennedy

Worked 500 - 599 Hours Jane Bingel and Herman Burton

Worked 400 - 499 Hours Ann Brinly and Non-volunteers

Worked 300 - 399 Hours Jim Hawkins and Bill Howe

Worked 200 - 299 Hours Hilary Gibbs, Becky Brignac, Joe Clem, Jonathan Perez, Jim Edwards, Anne Tincher, Michael Vu, Stephania Rogers, Barbara Hill, Roland Borey, Chris LaChance and Helen Burton

Worked 150 - 199 Hours Ed Adams, Paul Rogers, Mary Ann Tucker, Tom Scarsella, Lou Wheatcraft, Paul Shack and Eric Duran

Worked 100 - 149 Hours Robert Dell'Osso, Mary Burton, Merle Bunde, Larry Kruse, Eleanor Stanley, Wanda Hayden, Patricia Martin, Joan Shack, Carol MacGregor, Hanna Drago, Melanie Weisman, Phyllis Louderback, Marilyn Clark, Shirley Bishop, Zel Arbuckle, Joe Bryan and Cris Santiago

Worked 48 - 99 Hours Ramon McKinney, Emily Egan, Jean Kruse, Irene Ward, Pat Doerr, Susan Williams, Kristen Knoedler, Jean Ashmore Block, Kathleen Crabb, Judy Huston, Chuck Snyder, Polly Swardlin, Alan Wenger, Vance Brady, Mike Allen, Patsy Baukman, Jim Yaeger, Carol Harper, Chris Bingham, Marjorie Borey, Harvey Louderback, Josh Baukman, Norman Wong, Shawn Mazzetti, Marion Rotramel, Cynthia Jennings, Cliff Meinhardt, Penny Woodward, Cherre House, Gib Harper, Marie Ferguson, Charles Ferguson

New '96 volunteers who have contributed hours, but less than 48 hours Bill Ashcraft, Judy Bouma, Thomas Gean, Cari Cognata, Fran Cognata, Janet Miller, Vicki Forsyth, Deana Denham, Kevin Smith, Andrea Mason, Courtney McIntyre, Robert Oller, Mona Shoup, Henry Gibbs, Martha Hood, Hope Underwood, Patty Gill, Dekka Hassey, Sue Guillory, Chris Watenpool, Ron Natole, Marlene Ladner, Curtis Crosswhite, Laura Phillips and Jan White

CONGRATULATIONS 1996 VOLUNTEERS OF THE YEAR ANN BRINLY & HERMAN BURTON

Each year, the nature center staff recognizes a volunteer who has given exceptional service and whose contributions have been particularly valuable to ABNC. This decision is always a difficult one because so many of our volunteers do so much for the organization. This year was no exception - so much so that the staff designated two volunteers to receive the award: Ms. Ann Brinly and Mr. Herman Burton.

Ann has been a volunteer for 2 years and has become involved in most of the activities occurring at the nature center. She teaches classes, helps to organize teaching materials, works on prescribed prairie burns, helps with special event planning and implementation, provides refreshments for Board of Trustee Meetings and numerous other duties. Ann is willing to undertake almost any task to help and ABNC has called on her many times during 1996. We appreciate her so much.

Herman has helped primarily by using his expertise as an engineer to complete several new construction projects at the nature center. For ABNC's new Visitors Pavilion he contributed hundreds of hours of time to modify plans, solicit contractors, purchase materials, arrange for the donation of materials and oversee contractors. He also organized the installation and worked tirelessly to install several major parts of this new structure. This was an extended undertaking spanning months from start to finish. His was a primary role on this important project and we appreciate his efforts so much.

Thanks and congratulations to both of ABNC's Volunteers of the Year for 1996!

George Regmund

Texas Environmental Education Conference

April 10 - 12, 1997
The Hilton Hotel, UH Central Campus

This conference is designed to involve Texans in developing a framework for environmental education. In addition to formal presentations and working groups, there will be a showcase of EE programs for educators.

For more info call (713)283-3950.

CONTINUING EDUCATION

FEBRUARY

There will be no continuing education classes in February as it is volunteer training month. Mary Alice may have some vacancies in certain classes, if you are interested in a particular area contact Mary Alice.

WILDSCAPES

With Diana Foss, Texas Parks & Wildlife
Saturday, March 1, 1997
10:00 - 12:00 Auditorium

Diana Foss gives a dynamic presentation on how you can landscape to attract wildlife. Even if you have a small apartment patio, you can learn from her how to entice wildlife. There will be native Texas plants/herbs for sale on the porch. WILD BIRDS ETC. will also be there with books and miscellaneous items.

The membership/public will be invited to this presentation, so it is recommended that you arrive early for a good seat.

BIRDING for weekend folks

With George Regmund
Saturday, March 8, 1997
8:00 am - 11:00 am Auditorium/Field
Limit: 12

Well, we were able to "capture" George for another one of his wonderful birding classes. If you haven't been birding with him, you sure are missing out on a unique experience. Be sure to sign up early as his classes fill up quickly.

Bring your notepads, binoculars and dress according to weather conditions.

BIRDING for weekday folks

With George Regmund
Thursday, March 13, 1997
8:00 am - 11:00 am Auditorium/Field
Limit: 12

Same as the above class.

PHOTOGRAPHIC COMPOSITION

Instructor: Alex DiPrima
Friday, March 21, 7-9 pm; Saturday, March 22, 8-11 am; Sunday, March 23, 4-7 pm; and Friday, April 4, 7-9 pm
Cost: \$50 members 16 yr olds through adult

Learn how to use the basic elements of composition to create more interesting photographs. The class will include guided field sessions at the nature center. Participants are responsible for providing film and developing.

Reservations required by March 14th.

LADIES ONLY CAMPOUT

Leader: Melanie Weisman
Saturday, March 22, 1997
ABNC Site to be determined

This will be a learning, fun, and get-to-know-you time. Actually, it will be a little on the serious side for those of us who want to learn how to "rough it."

If you are not real interested in "roughing it," come for the afternoon and stay for dinner. There may be a charge for the meal. At this writing, details are incomplete but there will be more info at the February Volunteer Meeting and in the next Bayou Foliage.

Mr. John Tveten

If you attended his presentation at the January Membership Meeting, count that time as continuing education (only his presentation is to be counted, not the meeting.)

Thank-You for 1996

I understand that you guys liked the programs presented last year. They are the result of several people giving me contacts and phone numbers. I would like to thank and recognize Ruby Dilgren, Barb Hill, Mary Ann Tucker, Carol Harper, Pat Doerr, Jonathan Perez, Mary Alice Trumble, George Regmund and anyone else I may have left out.

If anyone out there has names/phone numbers of someone they think we could have to give a presentation, give me a call!

Becky

EARTH DAY MEETING

Plans are now underway for the Earth Week Celebration which will be April 16 - 20. If you are interested in getting involved and helping with this exciting event, come to the next planning meeting on Sunday, Feb. 2 at 12:00 noon.

A NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

I must confess that after agreeing to take on the Bayou Foliage, I wondered what I had gotten myself into. Well, I can honestly say that I'm glad I said yes. I have had so much fun and have really enjoyed working with so many nice people. Of course you already know about the many wonderful people here at the nature center - after all, that's one of the reasons you volunteer here too.

I'd like to thank all of those who have contributed to the Bayou Foliage. A special note of thanks to Helen, who has been wonderful about "holding my hand" as I get my bearing; to Wanda, whose help is so invaluable to me; and to Paula.

Georgia Colyer

STEWARDSHIP HELP NEEDED

1997 brings in a new year and new challenges for the nature center volunteers. I've spent most of November and December trying to identify the things that needed attention at ABNC. I'm sure it's no surprise to learn that the list of needs is longer than the available monies can support. Still, there is more that can get done and still maintain the budget.

This year stewardship will be gathering for and planting natural grasses in the new wetland areas, repairing trails and trail bridges, building and repairing boardwalks, upgrading the site's electrical system, painting, insulating and building existing and new facilities, battling to keep armadillos out of the garden and of course there are a few tallow trees that Tom forgot to treat last year. Need I mention preparation for the annual events? I hope that I'm not scaring everyone away.

The answer is organization and a plan of attack. Both of which I have been working on and you will be hearing more about in the near future. To get the ball rolling, at the January volunteer meeting I announced a plan to focus the stewardship efforts into four areas. Those areas are wetlands/bayou, prairie, trails, and farm/grounds. My hope is to focus folks on those areas of the nature center that most interest them.

You may be wondering with so much to do, why divide the resources? The answer is simple. I hope to attract those that like to just wade in the marsh, or work on the farm, or those that hold Bill and Tom's passion to eradicate the Chinese Tallow tree, but wouldn't come and enjoy the nature center otherwise. Those of you that are

more interested in any one specific area should contact me for a rundown of the specific activities that are being scheduled for that area. I am also looking for a volunteer to be a team leader for each of the steward areas. Team leaders will be asked to lead parties to insure the progress continuity required to fulfill the funding requirements and just help Mark and myself coordinate the area activities.

At January's meeting I also asked for a weekday steward coordinator. The more I considered this task, I thought it would be great if someone could take on this task but it might be easier if there were two or three people who could share the task of directing the community service work teams that come each week. Mark has been dividing his time trying to direct this work and still coordinate everything else. This would require spending most of the day facilitating and watching that the nature center's needs are being met. If you are willing to fill any of these positions or you have a suggestion please contact me.

Hope to hear from you! Thanks.

Jim Hawkins

THANK YOU WEEKEND TRAIL VOLUNTEERS

Many thanks to all the weekend trail volunteers for a successful two years of trails! Specifically - Mary Barton, Becky Brignac, Joe Bryan, James Crabb, Pat Doer, Susan Hesley, Paula Kennedy, Carol MacGregor, Judy Mayes, Sue Miller, Eldine Owens, Ray Parker, Louise Peck, Cris Santiago, John Siptak, Al Stock, Anne Tincher, Joanna Wactor, Lou Wheatcraft, and Bob Arnette. In addition, thanks to all the night hike leaders for coming out on Friday evenings: Sue Miller, Anne Tincher, Tom Scarsella, Hilary Gibbs, Chris Bingham, Jana Callan, Jim Callan, and Lou Wheatcraft.

Melanie Weisman

ATTENTION ALL QUILTERS

Anyone interested in beginning a group made quilt to be raffled at the '97 Fall Festival, please call Mary Alice. If we are going to make one this year, we need to get started. If any of you are acquainted with members of a quilt guild who might be interested, let them know. "Non-ABNC volunteers" are also welcome to lend their expertise.

CAMPING/HIKING/BACKPACKING FOR WOMEN

If any members or volunteers want to learn more about camping, hiking and backpacking, please contact Melanie Weisman at work 244-1620 or at home 488-7342 before February 14th. A weekend in March has been set aside to learn more about these outdoor activities and I need to know what topics (equipment, safety, cooking, locations, cost, etc.) you want addressed. Take advantage of this opportunity to get all your questions/concerns answered! Thanks.

ALL VOLUNTEER ANNUAL CAMP OUT AT WEST BANK

Saturday and Sunday, Feb. 22 & 23
Canceled if raining.
Reservations required by Feb. 15th
Meet in the parking lot at 10:00 - Leave at 10:30

This will be a fun, relaxing, informative, easy paced time. It will be a rare opportunity to visit an area normally closed to public access. There will be canoeing, hiking, a sing-a-long (bring your own instruments,) and a general good time. Mark will give a relaxed hike covering plant identification, bird identification, forest and prairie ecology.

Meet in the parking lot and drive to the west bank. There we will unload and carry our goods to the camp site which is the distance of a football field. Please allow for this when packing. Mark is arranging ways to carry our stuff to the camp site.

VOLUNTEER THANKS

George Regmund wrote the volunteer organization thanking us for the contribution for the repair of the folding machine. As many of you know, the folding machine facilitates the mailing of the "Along the Bayou" as well as other mailings.

NAME TAGS

We have a new Volunteer Training Class starting in February, so it is especially important that we wear our name tags so that they can try to sort out the multitude of people they will be meeting all at once. I will have some paper name tags at the volunteer meetings in case you forget yours. Thanks for your cooperation.

Helen

NEW LOG SHEET

The Volunteer Log Sheet has been revised to make it easier for you to log your hours. There is now a column on the left-hand side for Continuing Education. We will add all the hours on the right, so all you have to do is log your hours and write a description of what you have done. Thanks.

Helen

ANOTHER FUN OPPORTUNITY

The following Girl Scout Badge Workshops are scheduled for the next few months. Please contact Mary Alice if you can help with any of these (and be sure to ask Jane Bingel how much fun they are!)

February 8	Water Wonders (9:45 am - 3:00 pm)
March 1	Sky Search (evening - TBA)
8	Ecology (9:45 am - 3:00 pm)
22	Toymaker (9:45 am - 3:00 pm)
April 12	Sky Search (evening - TBA)
26	Water Wonders (9:45 am - 3:00 pm)

We will be doing Water Wonders on January 25th. Luckily, we have volunteers signed up for this one. However, if any of you would like to assist or to buddy in order to learn the procedure, this would be an excellent time.

RECYCLING PAYS

The ABNC Volunteers' treasury has swelled by \$189.07 in the first eleven months of 1996 thanks to our recycling receipts from Champion Recycling. Their payment schedule is tied to market values. Currently we receive payment for all paper collected as long as the amount is at least two tons per month. If Champion recovers over three tons per month from our two paper retrievers we are paid \$7.50 per ton. For amounts between two and three tons we are paid \$5.00 per ton. Thank you all for your response in 1996 and keep the paper coming in '97! In addition, mention to your friends who may not know, that those teal and yellow bins are in the ABNC parking lot.

Carol MacGregor

Environmental Notebook

Wetlands Part 2 by Lou Wheatcraft

What good are wetlands? This is a fundamental question whose answer depends on various points of view. I ended the last article saying that: "Today, commercial and residential development are primarily responsible for wetlands conversions." One fundamental question involves the extent to which a landowner may want to maintain the character of the land in order to support the natural or ecological functions which that property serves. It has been pointed out that land serves a purpose in "the economy of nature" as well as in the "transformative economy." The transformative economy refers to a traditional concept of property that perceived undeveloped land and resources as serving no function until they are transformed by human technology to produce value in the market place. The economy of nature refers to the ecological concept that land performs valuable functions in its natural state and that these functions are diminished by "development." In the transformative economy, wetlands are swamps harboring weeds and pests; they become valuable only when they are drained to permit, for example, the construction of residential subdivisions or the cultivation of crops. In the economy of nature, wetlands have inherent value as habitats for migratory birds, as sinks for flood waters, and as water purification systems. Taking the economy of nature view, many of the benefits obtained from wetlands are much better understood and it is important that you share these benefits with visitors to Armand Bayou Nature Center.

Wetlands produce large volumes of food in the form of plants and they harbor a rich, diverse assortment of plant and animal species, including fish, birds, reptiles, and mammals - valuable components of food chains that ultimately support human life. Nearly half of the animal species and over a fourth of the plant species listed as threatened or endangered depend on wetland habitats during some portion of their life cycles.

Loss of wetland habitat is an economic concern as well as an environmental concern. Coastal wetlands provide nursery and spawning grounds for 60-90% of all commercial fisheries. Government data shows that up to 70% of commercially harvested fish and shellfish in the US depend on wetland habitats. In some areas of the Southeast, that figure is nearly 100%. The US Fish and Wildlife Service estimates that the destruction of wetland habitats between 1954 and 1978 accounted for lost fisheries income of \$208 million annually!!! Wetland losses also endanger

economically and biologically significant waterfowl and fur-bearing animal populations that use wetlands as breeding and wintering grounds. Most of North America's ducks, for instance, use prairie potholes as breeding grounds.

Wetlands serve other important functions besides providing habitat for plants and animals. They act as nature's water re-purification system by filtering toxins and suspended solids and by processing pollutants far more efficiently than state-of-the-art water-purification plants. When wetlands are filled in, the streams, bayous, and estuaries to which they are connected become more polluted. As wetlands filter water, they also recharge ground-water supplies, a critical source of public water in many parts of the country. Wetlands have been used to process sewage, and scientists have begun to construct artificial wetlands for use as water-purification systems.

Wetlands are also valuable in controlling floods and storm surges and in preventing erosion along rivers and fragile shorelines. Most floodplain acreage is wetlands. Wetlands act as sponges, slowing flood waters and regulating water quantity by absorbing water during wet seasons and releasing it through springs during dryer seasons. Some wetland plants, such as sphagnum moss, can hold up to 15 times their weight in water. [During my trail tours at ABNC, I always point out how, in our forests, nature stores water during the wet times but man digs ditches to drain the water off and send it down stream - as evidenced by the Martyn family's ditches in the forest.] River sediment is deposited on flood plains over time, preventing a rise in the height of the river. This also mitigates the danger and intensity of future floods.

The value of wetlands in flood control and the impacts man can have on flood control by messing up the wetlands became very clear in both the 1993 upper Mississippi valley flooding as well as last month's flooding in Northern California and parts of Oregon and Washington State. In many areas along the rivers, the landscape had been artificially altered by the construction of levees, flood walls, dikes, and diversion channels that cut the rivers off from their floodplains. These structures prevented the occasional minor flooding of the floodplains, where wetlands plants had previously slowed and absorbed the flow of the excess water. The structures also forced waters from heavy rains into artificially narrow channels. Instead of gradually spreading out over natural floodplains along their course, the swollen rivers finally broke through the levees in great waves flooding towns, housing projects, and farms that had been built in

these historical floodplains. ~~After~~ward, the levees prevented floodwaters from returning to the river.

Urban development not only destroys wetlands along river banks, but it also increases the rate and volume of surface-water runoff and consequently the possibility of flood damage. In a flood protection study for the Charles River area near Boston, the US Army Corps of Engineers estimated that destruction of surrounding wetlands would cost an average of \$17 million annually in flood damage. It was determined that the most efficient flood-protection alternative in that locale was to preserve and protect the wetlands. Other communities are also finding that restoring and preserving wetlands is a cost-efficient method of flood control in the long run.

Wetland plants also serve to control erosion. The roots of wetland vegetation bind the soil, and their foliage slows and regulates water movement that would otherwise wash away the soil. In coastal areas, wetland plants slow wave-motion and prevent the erosion of shorelines. Coastal erosion is a critical problem in many shore communities.

Scientists and government agencies still have much to learn about wetland ecosystems. A 1991 study by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) found that 63% of coastal wetlands are forested and scrub-shrub areas, about which very little is known. Salt marshes and tidal flats, ecosystems that have received considerably more study, collectively account for only 20 percent of coastal wetlands.

As I have shown, wetlands are very beneficial not only to the wildlife dependent on the wetlands but to man as well - as part of our food chain, supplying us with clean drinking water, and in flood control. Armand Bayou Nature Center is special because of its 3 ecosystems and inseparable ties to wetlands. This allows all of us to share our knowledge of the benefits of wetlands and how important it is to all of us that the wetlands are preserved.

Source: "Introduction to Environmental Law and Policy - Protecting the Environment Through Law", by C. M. Valente and W. D. Valente, West Publishing Company, 1995.

Next: Environmental law and wetlands

THE HOUSTON HOME AND GARDEN SHOW

The Houston Home and Garden show, Vacation and Leisure and Texas Home Computer show is February 21, 22, and 23rd. Armand Bayou Nature Center again has a FREE booth. Now we need volunteers to man the booth. We will take any number of hours you are willing to volunteer. Two to three people at the booth is adequate. If there are others, it will give each of you an opportunity to view the exhibits. The times are from 2 pm til 9 pm on Friday, 10 am til 9 pm on Saturday and 11 am til 6 pm on Sunday. At 6 pm on Thursday, Feb 13, Volunteer meeting night, Lynn Shigekawa will give us a prep talk on dress, demeanor and techniques to promote the nature center. Remember to allow enough time to drive to the George Brown Convention Center and to park prior to your shift. There is only paid parking so consider carpooling (the environmentally appropriate thing to do!) You will pick up your badge at the admission booth. Be sure to return it when you leave so that other volunteers will also have a free badge.

I will need someone with a large van or truck to volunteer to take and return the necessary supplies to the exhibit hall. The articles to carry will include a 10 x 10 carpet, two six foot tables, two fold up chairs, plus numerous sign boards, brochures and decor items. We will be assigned a date and time to move in ahead of the opening of the show, but the pick up at the end of the show begins about an hour after the show closes. I need your help! Last year over 55,000 people attended this exhibit. *What great exposure for Armand Bayou Nature Center.* Please call Barb Hill at 488-2653.

THANKS FOR ASKING

As I mentioned at the last volunteer meeting, I really appreciate all your kind thoughts and prayers for my son Steven while he was in the hospital. He is home and doing well after enduring 25 days at Clear Lake Hospital (not that they didn't treat him royally.) He did, however, consume 23 units of blood while he was there. Since so many people have asked me about giving blood, I wanted to let you know that you may donate blood at any blood center, including the one at Columbia Clear Lake Hospital, and state that you wish it to be credited to Steven Trumble. You will need to tell them that he was a patient there. My family truly appreciates your donations and concerns.

Thanks,
Mary Alice Trumble

VOLUNTEER DUTY SCHEDULE

In an attempt to take some of the load off of the Coordinators, and to help cut down on our "no show" rate, a list of the persons who have volunteered for various assignments will be printed in the Bayou Folio each month. If you are scheduled for a particular duty and you are unable to attend, please use this schedule to try to find your own substitute. You may be able to trade weekends, or swap a Saturday for a Sunday with someone who has the same duty another time during the month. If you do trade, please be sure to call the appropriate coordinator and the ABNC desk to inform them.

DATE	11:00 TRAIL	2:00 TRAIL	INFO. SERVICES	FARM DEMO	FARM DEMO	NAT. HIST. DEMO	FARM INTERP.
Sat. 2/1	Susan Hesley	Carol MacGregor	Bob Smither	Mary Ann Tucker Basket Weaving		Ruby Dilgren Alligators	Al Stock
Sun. 2/2			Ruby Dilgren	Rogers Collins Blacksmithing		Anne Tincher Pond Life	Marjorie Bory
Sat. 2/8	James Crabb	Lou Wheatcraft	Georgia Colyer	Stephania & Paul Rogers Rope Making		Laura & Bob Hendrix Owls	Eldine Owens
Sun. 2/9			Joan Shack	Emily Egan Weaving		Eleanor Stanley Reptiles	Susan Williams
Sat. 2/15	Louise Peck	Ray Parker	Jean Kruse	Larry Veale Indian Crafts		Zel Arbuckle Snakes	Paula Thorson
Sun. 2/16			Mary Ann Tucker	Ann Brinly Dyeing Easter Eggs		Eric Duran Shorelife of Galv. Bay	Larry Kruse
Sat. 2/22		Anne Tincher	Charles Ferguson	Marion Rotramel Woodstove		Michael Vu - Bats Ruby Dilgren - Opposums Jonathan P. - Animal Signs	Marie Ferguson
Sun. 2/23		Patty Gill	Joe Bryan	Tom Scarsella Blacksmithing		Pat Grimes - Bats Ruby Dilgren - Marsupials Dekka Hassey - Armadillos	Stephania & Paul Rogers

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

VOLUNTEER BOARD FOR 1997

	Home	Office		Home	Office
Helen Burton	281-474-7133		Shirley Bishop	281-488-4157	
Becky Brignac	713-947-0216		Eleanor Stanley	713-455-1502	
Susan Williams	281-487-3033	713-743-2935	Susan Hesley	281-337-3129	713-453-5204
Carol MacGregor	281-488-7293		Jane Bingle	281-554-5069	281-338-4814
Jim Hawkins	281-326-5375	409-942-3134	Alan Wenger	281-488-0112	
Bob Smither	281-331-2548	281-331-2744	Georgia Colyer	281-996-7888	713-776-5745 fax

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