



Bayou Foliage

Volume 16 No. 11 November 1998
A publication of the Armand Bayou Nature Center Volunteers
"Interested + Informed + Involved"

November Calendar

- 1 Fall Festival Subcommittee Chairs, 3:00
- 1 Volunteer Board Meeting, 4:00
- 7 Stewardship Saturday (Trail, forest, facilities)
- 7 & 8 Bulb Pick-Up
- 12 Volunteer Meeting
- 8 Bayou Foliage Inputs Due
- 14 & 15 Fall Festival
- 21 Stewardship (Prairie and marsh)

ABNCV MEETING Thursday, October 12, 1998 ABNC Auditorium

- 6:30 - Snacks and Conversation
- 7:00 - Program
- 8:00 - Volunteer Meeting
- 9:00 - Adjourn

Our program this month will be of special interest to all you bird lovers and wannabes! Winnie Burkett, a former ABNC volunteer, will give a presentation entitled "Colonial Waterbirds of Galveston Bay". She will tell us all about pelicans, egrets, herons, spoonbills, gulls, and terns. Please join us for an interesting and informative program.

CONTINUING EDUCATION

FARM TOOL CLASS!
10:00 a.m., Saturday, December 12th

ABNC Woodshop

Have you wanted to know more about all those tools in the woodshop at the Nature Center? What they are called? What they are used for? If so, this class is for you. Tom Scarcella, one of our own volunteers, will be the instructor.

The sign-up sheets for this program can be found in the breakroom.

Jean Kruse

Happy Birthday!

Iris Cromartie	11/2	Sarah Zarcaro	11/3
Martha Hood	11/4	Marilyn Clark	11/4
Ruth Elder	11/5	Mary Barton	11/9
Angela Hicks	11/10	Vance Brady	11/10
Henry Gibbs	11/10	Pat Grimes	11/13
Patsy Cashion	11/14	Janet Miller	11/14
Mike Allen	11/16	Scot White	11/16
Bill Ashcraft	11/23	Georgia Colyer	11/23
Larry Kruse	11/23	Marie Ferguson	11/26
Joan Crane	11/30		

WE NEED YOUR HELP!

Yes, we are busy getting ready for Creepy Crawlers, Fall Festival, and Yule Tide, but spring lurks just around the corner. Perhaps you think you can't handle one more event? The Garden Tour Committee, however, has already been looking at gardens and yards for the April, 1999 garden tour, and we do have a few more gardens to look at. Then, in the early spring we will start meeting regularly to get that show on the road. Please join us! We can always use a few good men and women or two! Call me at (281) 488-2653.

Barb Hill

PRINTING COMPLIMENTS OF GELANESE

MINUTES OF THE ABNCV MEETING
Thursday, October 8, 1998

Jean Kruse introduced our speakers, Mike Isermann, ABNC Board of Directors, and Gerald Brown, landscape architect, who gave a presentation on the new entrance for the nature center. Colin Shackelford then described the projects he is working on: nonpoint pollution and conservation landscaping and the opportunities for volunteers to help. Helen and Mary Alice introduced the new volunteers and presented them with their nametags and certificates. The winner of the T.R.E.E. award was Patrick Wornick, who has already worked over 90 hours. Margorie Borey was the winner of the M.O.S.S. award as the outstanding mentor. Helen then introduced the Volunteer Board to the new volunteers. The business meeting was called to order, and the minutes of the August meeting were approved as published in the *Bayou Foliage*. Jean read the Treasurer's Report, which reflects the checking account balance of \$2,122.18 and savings account balance of \$606.84 for a total of \$2,729.02. Mary Alice announced that the Volunteer of the Month is Susan Williams, who has worked on special events, served on the Board, and worked on mailings.

In the staff report, Mary Alice reminded us that we still need a farm coordinator and that we have volunteer opportunities for farm classes, birthday parties, and scout badges. George thanked everyone who worked so hard on the electrical upgrade and gave special recognition to Jim Hawkins, who headed up the project.

Jean announced that Winnie Burkett will speak on the water birds of Galveston Bay at November's meeting. Eric Duran's continuing education class on snakes was rescheduled for October 10, and the wildflower class was postponed until next spring. There will be a prairie plant identification class on November 7 and a farm tools class on December 12.

Respectfully submitted,
Patsy Cashion

INFLATION HITS AGAIN

We previously announced that a replacement volunteer name badge would cost \$5. The cost of these has now gone up to \$7.50, so guard your badge with your life. As you know, all volunteers are given a badge when they complete training. After that, replacements are paid for by the volunteer.

COMMENTS FROM THE CHAIR

M.O.S.S. AND T.R.E.E AWARDS

At the October meeting we honored one of the mentors who had been nominated for the M.O.S.S. (Mentor of Super Stature) award (it's hard choosing one) and the volunteer who trained in February who had volunteered the most hours for the T.R.E.E (Terrific Rookie Exhibiting Enthusiasm) award. Patrick Wornick received the T.R.E.E. award, and Marjorie Borey received the M.O.S.S. award. Thanks to both of you, and thank you to all the mentors and new volunteers.

BAYOU FOLIAGE EDITOR NEEDED

If anyone is interested in becoming editor of the *Bayou Foliage* please let Helen Burton know. Susan Williams has done a wonderful job this past year, and would like to become involved in other things at the nature center. If you have any questions about what this entails call Helen or Susan.

Helen Burton

JOB OPENING
ADMINISTRATIVE DIRECTOR

People-oriented Administrative Director for non-profit nature preserve and public outdoor education facility. Responsibilities: Budget management, planning and reporting, supervision of grant development and use; staff issues, reviews, counseling; administrative policies; membership development. Responsible to Board of Trustees. Administrative/management experience and education required. 40 hours/week. Send resume to: Bob Brinly, PO box 672, Deer Park, TX 77536.

VOLUNTEER OF THE MONTH
SUSAN WILLIAMS

Each month an ABNC volunteer is recognized for his or her outstanding service to the nature center. This month's Volunteer of the Month is Susan Williams. Susan went through volunteer training in September 1995 and since that time has been active in a number of ways. She has worked at many of our special events, served as farm interpreter, chaired the mailing committee, served as secretary of the volunteer board and is currently editor of *Bayou Foliage*, the monthly volunteer newsletter. Susan spends many hours turning out a top-notch paper which serves as a vital link of communication in our volunteer organization. Susan is a dedicated volunteer who serves the nature center with a smile and a sense of professionalism. We are very fortunate to have her here.

FALL FESTIVAL TIME

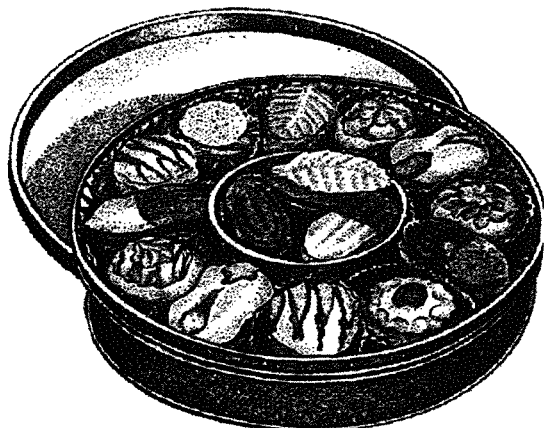
NOVEMBER 14TH AND 15TH

We need your help! Our annual Fall Festival will soon be here and we are still in need of a number of volunteers to assist with the many crafts and activities. The sign-up sheets can be found in the breakroom, and attached to them is a description of what you will be asked to do for each activity or craft. No surprises here! For those who want to try something new, training will be provided ahead of time if you wish. We especially need your help in the following areas:

Admissions	Children's Crafts	Hoe Cakes
Ice Cream Stan	Hosting	Ticket Booths
Traffic	Scarecrow Making	Washday

There are still some openings on some of the other activities as well. Please join us at what is one of the most exciting and fun events at ABNC each year!

Jean Kruse



WE NEED YOUR COOKIES!

The temperature has dropped to below seventy degrees for the first time in many, many months. So fire up your oven and start making some really delicious cookies for Fall Festival. We look forward to all those great varieties. Remember that the kids like Rice Krispie treats as well as chocolate chips. Don't worry about leftovers; Stephania has a great freezer to hold the leftovers till Yule Tide. Cookie sales always bring a tidy income, so the more the better. There will be a sign-up sheet by the volunteer logbook. However, if you forget to sign up, you can still bring cookies the two days of the event, November 14 and 15th. Thanks.

Stephania Rogers and Barb Hill

QUILT UPDATE

The Fall Festival Raffle Quilt is finished and on display in the Kanaka Admissions Building. Ticket sales are in progress. Please drop by the admissions building to pick up a packet of tickets to sell to your family, friends, and co-workers. The packet includes a picture of the quilt, and 12 tickets. Be sure to get your own tickets early. The tickets are \$1.00 each or 6 for \$5.00. All money should be turned in to Sandy at the Kanaka Building, and ticket stubs should be deposited in the container which is there for that purpose.

Mary Ann Tucker, (281)488-0796

FALL FESTIVAL REMINDERS

- ◆ Volunteers, here are a few last-minute reminders before the big weekend.
- ◆ We could use help with the set-up duties on Friday, November 13.
- ◆ Directional signs to parking need to be set up early Saturday morning, November 14.
- ◆ Lots and lots of cookies are needed for the volunteer cookie booth.
- ◆ We need food donations for breakfast both mornings in the break room at 8:00 am. (This is for the volunteers and craftspeople who are working the festival. Fruit, pastries, juice, etc. would be appreciated.)
- ◆ Wear appropriate turn-of-the-century clothing. (Call with any questions you might have.)
- ◆ Wear your volunteer name badge.
- ◆ We need ice chests to keep drinks in. Please label and plan to pick them up the week after the festival. (Otherwise we cannot guarantee their safe return.)
- ◆ Sign up for the barbecue dinner to be held on Saturday evening at 5:30 pm. The cost is \$4.50. **Deadline is November 6.**
- ◆ On the day of the festival plan to park in the UHCL parking lot and take the shuttle over unless you are working the first shift. The shuttle begins at 9:30 and runs till 5:30. After the festival you may ride the shuttle to UHCL, get your car and return to ABNC for the barbecue.
- ◆ Please arrive **ahead of time** for your shift. Check in at the information tent, initial your time slot and receive your free drink tickets. You will receive 2 tickets for each shift you work.
- ◆ Clean up day is Monday, November 16. We can always use help.

Thank you for the huge amount of work this event demands. It couldn't be done without all our hard-working volunteers. Please call if you have any questions.

Mary Alice Trumble

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

FARM TEACHERS

FARM LIFE (4)

November 4, 19, 20	10-11:30 am
February 3, 4, 5	10-11:30 am

HANDS-ON-HISTORY (2)

November 6	10-12 noon
January 15	10-12 noon

BIRTHDAY PARTY (REPTILES)

November 8	2:15-3:00 pm
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WEBELOS FORESTER/NATURALIST BADGE (4)

January 23	10:00-3:00 pm
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The number of teachers needed is listed in parentheses.

Please call me if you can help with any of the above. Thanks.

Mary Alice

HOMECOMING DAY FOR FORMER MEMBERS

ABNC provided a feast for the mosquitoes when more than 130 guests arrived for our homecoming day for former members. Volunteers made this day possible by providing demonstrations and interpretations for our various stations. Guests were able to see slide shows, go on a free pontoon boat ride, use viewing scopes on the prairie platform, and enjoy the interpreters and demonstrators. We heard many positive comments about the center and the new facilities we have added. Nine memberships were sold within a few hours and several people requested membership forms.

Very special thanks to the following volunteers who helped to make this a special day for former members: Ed Adams, Zel Arbuckle, Dick Benoit, Paula Kennedy, Mary Ann Tucker, Andrew and Linda Hamlett, Jonathan Perez, Ken Russell, Pat Doerr, Joe Clem, and Doug and Cherry Barfoot. We appreciate everything you do during this busy fall season of events.

Lynn Shigekawa

WOLVES ACROSS THE BAYOU

It was a cool spring morning in 1960 and a perfect day to go to the bayou. The woods were alive with birds searching for food. As I eased along the trail, a doe and her fawn crossed about 200 feet ahead. They passed without a sound and disappeared in an instant. A big cottontail scampered into a brush pile near a downed tree and froze. He never moved a hair as he cautiously watched me pass.

The door to the potato house was ajar so I thought I should check it out. I found that Uncle Jim had propped it open. He did that from time to time to air the building out. A red-shouldered hawk sailed across the field as I came up to it. I decided to cross the field by the big magnolia. The grass was always deep there, and it wasn't my favorite place to cross. I always worried about a big rattler lying in wait, just to get me by the leg.

By the boat landing several crows were gathered in the cedars, all squawking with no one but me listening. Avoiding my arrival, they gathered in the trees by the north fence. Trying to get their attention, I tried to speak their language. After a few sickening squawks, the woods grew very still. The crows were now gone. But a yelp came from across the bayou. At the boat landing the bayou made a turn due west for about 50 yards. And there, running along the bayou in my direction was a wolf pup. Just behind him was a big skinny wolf, apparently the pup's mother. My broken crow caws had their attention like a dinner bell at the farmhouse. Realizing there was no wounded crow, the big wolf gave out one yelp and like the crows they were gone, leaving the woods again deathly quiet.

Jean West

Editor's note: This was first printed in the Bayou Foliage in May 1989. The author, Jean West, is the nephew of Jimmy Martyn. My apologies to Mr. West who I mistakenly identified as Mr. Martyn's niece in last month's edition of the newsletter. I am most appreciative of Mr. West's graciousness when informed of my error. Susan



Environmental Notebook
Ecological Literacy Part II
By Lou Wheatcraft

In this second in this series of articles, I am focusing on the value and importance of environmental education and ecological literacy. In upcoming articles I will explore the topics of sustainable development, eco-efficiency, industrial ecology, and bio-mimicry.

In the book, "The Web of Life", Fritjof Capra formulated a set of principles of organization that may be identified as the basic principles of ecology that we can use as guidelines to build sustainable human communities. These principles are: interdependence, recycling, closed systems, partnerships, flexibility, and diversity. Last month I covered the first three of these principles, in this article I will cover the final three principles.

4. Partnerships. Partnerships are an essential characteristic of sustainable communities. The cyclical exchanges of energy and resources in an ecosystem are sustained by pervasive cooperation. We have seen that since the creation of the first nucleated cells over two billion years ago, life on Earth has proceeded through ever more intricate arrangements of cooperation and coevolution. Partnership - the tendency to associate, establish links, live along side one another, and cooperate - is one of the hallmarks of life.

In human communities partnership means democracy and personal empowerment, because each member of the community plays an important role. As a partnership proceeds, each partner better understands the needs of the other. In a true, committed partnership both partners learn and change; they co-evolve. Here again we notice the basic tension between the challenge of ecological sustainability and the way in which our present societies are structured, between economics and ecology. Economics emphasizes competition, expansion, and domination; ecology emphasizes cooperation, conservation, and partnership.

The principles of ecology mentioned so far-interdependence, the cyclical flow of resources, cooperation, and partnership-are all different aspects of the same pattern of organization. This is how ecosystems organize themselves to maximize sustainability. Once we have understood this pattern, we can ask more detailed questions. For example, what is the resilience of these ecological communities? How do they react to outside disturbances? These questions lead to two further principles of ecology - flexibility and diversity - that enable ecosystems to survive disturbances and adapt to changing conditions.

5. Flexibility. The flexibility of an ecosystem is a consequence of its multiple feedback loops, which tend to bring the system back into balance whenever there is a deviation from the norm, due to changing environmental conditions. For example, if an unusually warm summer results in increased growth of algae in a lake, some species of fish feeding on these algae may flourish and breed more, so that their numbers increase and they begin to deplete the algae. Once their major source of food is reduced, the fish will begin to die out. As the fish population drops, the algae will recover and expand again. In this way the original disturbance generates a fluctuation around a feedback loop, which eventually brings the fish/algae system back into balance.

Disturbances of that kind happen all the time, because things in the environment change all the time, and thus the net effect is continual fluctuation. All the variables we can observe in ecosystem-population densities, availability of nutrients, weather patterns, and so forth-always fluctuate. This is how ecosystems maintain themselves in a flexible state, ready to adapt to changing conditions. The web of life is a flexible, ever-fluctuating network. The more variables are kept fluctuating, the more

dynamic is the system; the greater is its flexibility; and the greater is its ability to adapt to changing conditions.

All ecological fluctuations take place between tolerance limits. There is always the danger that the whole system will collapse when a fluctuation goes beyond those limits and the system can no longer compensate for it. The same is true of human communities. Lack of flexibility manifests itself as stress. In particular, stress will occur when one or more variables of the system are pushed to their extreme values, which induces increased rigidity throughout the system. Temporary stress is an essential aspect of life, but prolonged stress is harmful and destructive to the system. These considerations lead to the important realization that managing a social system - a company, a city, or an economy - means finding the optimal values for the system's variables. If one tries to maximize any single variable instead of optimizing it, this will invariably lead to the destruction of the system as a whole.

The principle of flexibility also suggests a corresponding strategy of conflict resolution. In every community there will invariably be contradictions and conflicts, which cannot be resolved in favor of one or the other side. For example, the community will need stability and change, order and freedom, tradition and innovation. Rather than by rigid decisions, these unavoidable conflicts are much better resolved by establishing a dynamic balance. Ecological literacy includes the knowledge that both sides of a conflict can be important, depending on the context, and that the contradictions within a community are signs of its diversity and vitality and thus contribute to the system's viability.

6. Diversity. In ecosystems the role of diversity is closely connected with the system's network structure. A diverse ecosystem will also be resilient, because it contains many species with overlapping ecological functions that can partially replace one another. When a particular species is destroyed by a severe disturbance so that a link in the network is broken, a diverse community will be able to survive and reorganize itself, because other links in the network can at least partially fulfill the function of the destroyed species. In other words, the more complex the network is, the more complex its pattern of interconnections, the more resilient it will be.

In ecosystems the complexity of the network is a consequence of its biodiversity, and thus a diverse ecological community is a resilient community. In human communities ethnic and cultural diversity may play the same role. Diversity means many different relationships, many different approaches to the same problem. A diverse community is a resilient community, capable of adapting to changing situations.

However, diversity is a strategic advantage only if there is a truly vibrant community, sustained by a web of relationships. If the community is fragmented into isolated groups and individuals, diversity can easily become a source of prejudice and friction. But if the community is aware of the interdependence of all its members, diversity will enrich all the relationships and thus enrich the community as a whole, as well as each individual member. In such a community information and ideas flow freely through the entire network, and the diversity of interpretations and learning styles - even the diversity of mistakes-will enrich the entire community.

These, then, are some of the basic principles of ecology - interdependence, recycling, closed systems, partnership, flexibility, diversity, and, as a consequence of all those, sustainability. As our century comes to a close and we go toward the beginning of a new millennium, the survival of humanity will depend on our ecological literacy, on our ability to understand these principles of ecology and live accordingly. - Fritjof Capra

Next month I begin discussions on how some people are putting these principles in to practice to achieve the goal of sustainable development.

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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 Foliage 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.

<u>DATE</u>	<u>11:00 TRAIL</u>	<u>2:00 TRAIL</u>	<u>INFO. SERVICES</u>	<u>FARM INTER.</u>	<u>FARM DEMO</u>	<u>NAT. HISTORY DEMO</u>
Sun. 11/1	--	Joe Bryan	Ken Russell	Marjorie Borey	Stephania Rogers (Ropemaking)	Jim Crabb (Mushrooms)
Sat. 11/7	--	Helen Powell	Joyce Roberts	Jane Bingel	Tom Scarcella (Wood Shop)	Ruby Dilgren (Skulle)
Sun 11/8	--	Martha Hood	Doug Barfoot	Polly Swerdlin	Ed Adams (Ropemaking)	Polly Swerdlin (Bird Adaptations)
Sat. 11/14	Fall Festival	--	--	--	--	--
Sun 11/15	Fall Festival	--	--	--	--	--
Sat. 11/21	Louise Peck	Ray Parker	Joan Shack	Eleanor Stanley	Chris Bingham (Cheese)	Pat Grimes (Snakes)
Sun. 11/22	--	Ron Natole	Paul Brunkow	Christine Ribeiro (Basket Weaving)	Mary Ann Tucker (Reptiles)	Ann Tischer (Pond Life)
Sat. 11/28	Patrick Wornick	Merle Bunde	Linda Hamlett	Susan Williams	Irene Ward (Butter Making)	Bob & Laura Hendrix (Owls)
Sun. 11/29	--	Cris Santiago	Merle Bunde	Marsha Goss	Polly Swerdlin (Stereoptican)	Christine Ribiero (White Tail Deer)

1998 VOLUNTEER BOARD

	<u>Home</u>	<u>Office</u>
Helen Burton	281-474-7133	Hanna Drago
Jean Kruse	281-486-0787	Polly Swerdlin
Patsy Cashion	281-485-2681	713-652-1099
Georgia Colyer	281-996-7888	Weekend Trail
Chuck Snyder	281-480-1550	Weekend Trail
Ruby Dilgren	281-488-1727	Newsletter
Michael Vu	281-471-1114	281-487-3033
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		281-488-8193
		281-471-0979
		713-946-2754
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