



Bayou Foliage

Vol. 17 No. 7 July 1999

A Publication of the
Armand Bayou Nature Center Volunteers
"Interested + Informed + Involved"

July Calendar

July 3	Stewardship Saturday
July 8	Volunteer Meeting
July 8	Bayou Foliage Submissions Deadline
July 17	Stewardship Saturday

ABNCV MEETING
Thursday, July 8, 1999
Nature Center Auditorium

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

The speaker this month will be a representative from the Texas Marine Stranding Network. She will be talking about the mission and work of their organization, and also touching on marine mammals of the Texas Gulf Coast. Please join us for an interesting and informative program.

Amphibian Monitoring at ABNC

ABNC has initiated an amphibian monitoring program on the property. The program involves gathering data on habitats, habits, and species composition. The project is in cooperation with Texas Parks and Wildlife (or TPWD). Eventually the date will be made available to TPWD, the staff and volunteers. If anyone is interested in becoming involved in fieldwork for the project please attend the upcoming Continuing Education class. For more information please contact Eric Duran or Jonathan Perez at the nature center/ 281-474-2551.

Continuing Education

Amphibians at ABNC

Saturday, July 10, 10:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.
ABNC Auditorium

ABNC staff will present this class concerning Nature Center frogs, toads, and salamanders. Learn natural history, identification calls, taxonomy, and basic anatomy. This class will also be an introduction for volunteers, to the program from Amphibian Monitoring at ABNC. Also included a night hike later in the day at 8:00 p.m., for those interested.

Tracks and Traces

Saturday, July 24, 10 a.m. - 12 p.m.
ABNC Auditorium

Jonathan Perez will be bringing back his excellent class about Animal Tracks and signs. Foot tracks, scatology, and other signs will be discussed.

The sign-up sheets for these programs can be found in the breakroom.

Eric Duran

Staff Changes

A number of staff changes have occurred during the past month. After twelve years of service at ABNC, Mary Alice Trumble has resigned as Director of Education to pursue other opportunities. Best of luck to her in her future endeavors. We are very fortunate to welcome to the staff Linda Sumner, formerly with the Education Department at the Houston Zoo, as the Nature Center's new Director of Education.

George will be assuming the duties of volunteer coordinator, in addition to his other responsibilities. One of his first tasks during June and July will be establishing the new Volunteer Office in the Heiman House.

Eric Duran has been hired on full time as Education Curator. The Education Curator position involves maintaining a collection of supplies, media, live and dead specimens for use in education by volunteers and staff, and some other activities.

Keesha, our Visitor Service Coordinator, had her baby girl, on Sunday, June 14. Adamia weighed 4 pounds 12 ounces and is 17 1/2 inches long.

Ephriam Dickson

Printing Compliments of Celanese

Comments From the Chair

Best Wishes Carol

It's a great loss when any active volunteer moves away, but it's particularly difficult to have to say goodbye to Carol MacGregor, who will very soon be moving to Georgia. In her more than 22 years at ABNC, Carol has done it all and has come to exemplify what volunteerism is all about. Carol's cheerfulness, her enthusiasm, and her kindness will be greatly missed. We wish you the best Carol and thank you for your many, many contributions to Armand Bayou Nature Center.

Board Retreat

Thanks also go to Eric Duran, Linda Hamlett, Hanna Drago, Jane Bingel, Ruby Dilgren, Ken Russell and Andrew Hamlett. They gave up a perfectly good Sunday afternoon recently to meet to discuss issues which we don't have the time to discuss at regular monthly meetings. Most of the time was spent on the tedious task of reviewing proposed changes to the ABNC Volunteer bylaws. The revised bylaws will be given to the Nature Center staff to review, voted on by the Board, published in the Bayou Foliage, then presented to the membership for approval. Please take a few minutes to read them when they're published in the newsletter. This is your opportunity to bring up any changes you feel should be made in our bylaws.

Volunteer Office

Ephriam Dickson has announced that there will be a volunteer office in the Heiman House in the near future. The volunteer logbook and continuing education sign-up sheets will be located there - permanently! (For now, they are back in the interpretive building break room.)

Susan

From the Editor

The *Bayou Foliage* is a Publication of the Armand Bayou Nature Center Volunteer Organization. All volunteers have the opportunity and are encouraged to submit information to the newsletter if you are interested in doing so. It can regard things dealing with the volunteer organization, events, the nature center itself, natural history, experiences, and etc. Any volunteers who have an interest in submitting something to the newsletter or an idea for the newsletter, please do so. You can send articles or info to me, by either dropping it off at the *Bayou Foliage* mailbox in the breakroom or by e-mailing it to me at (Bachwblr@aol.com).

The deadline for submitting articles for the newsletter is the night of the Volunteer Meeting which is the second Thursday of the month, unless otherwise noted. Thanks!

Nature Center History!

Susan Williams, found this article awhile back regarding Jimmy Martyn and some history of the place we all know now as Armand Bayou Nature Center. We both thought it would be a very interesting article to share with everyone.

Reprinted from the Houston Press

Thursday, September 20, 1962

by: Marge Crumbaker, Press Staff Writer

PROGRESS CREEPS IN - HE LIVES AS OF OLD

James Malichi Martyn, 84 this month, is living proof there's no place like home, and the simpler the better.

In the colorful span of his abundant life, James, who laughed and paused to think about the correct spelling of his middle name, has made it gracefully and successfully without the use of such things as electricity, cars, radios, TV, movies, frozen dinners, ice, supermarkets, patios, or central heating.

Slight and alert, James is an astounding part of Harris County history.

James was born in Houston and settled with his parents on the lonely 84 acres which is now only one mile from the Clear Lake Manned Space Craft Center, just 83 1/2 years ago. In all that time he has never moved --never even taken a job away from the ranch.

HIS PARLOR

When Photographer Tony Trielo and I paid him a visit, we found him busily repairing a cattle pen. He gallantly doffed his straw hat and wiped the sweat from his clear blue eyes, apologized for his working overalls and invited: "come into my parlor and let's visit."

I headed for the house and what I thought would be the parlor, but James stopped under a tree, dusted off a wooden bench and invited us to make ourselves comfortable. He grinned: "I'm getting like this old mulberry tree - worn and beat. This was just a sapling during the storm of 1900."

Then he answered many questions, added many interesting facts, and told of some wonderful experiences.

A WILDERNESS

"My daddy," he began, "was born in England, but came to Texas in his youth. One day on his job in Houston, raising and lowering a railroad bridge across the bayou, the bridge stuck and a sailboat crashed into it and before it was all over my father quit and told them he had 84 acres out in the woods and he was moving out to become a farmer. I was six months old then. It was a wilderness here. There were

no roads to Houston. Come to think of it, there weren't any roads to anywhere. To get out to Galveston we walked down there in the woods to Middle Bayou, then sailed across Clear Lake and over to Galveston."

Depending on the wind, the trip took from three to twelve days. It was the way James and his father took their produce, hogs and cattle to market, and the way they got needed supplies.

"We raised everything we needed right here, except flour, salt, and medicine. We had to."

DOESN'T WANT TO SELL

James said doctors were scarce in those days when wolves, wild turkeys and deer came boldly into the yard. "Many of the time I've lain in that bed in there shaking so bad I almost fell off, malaria about to get me. About all we had to doctor ourselves with was calomel. And that horrid stuff is the reason I don't have my own teeth today."

The land cost James' father \$5 an acre, and the recent offer of \$5,000 per acre didn't impress James much, not even to make room for the space center he said: "Oh, I'm for progress, but it was trying to push me out of my home. Now, if they'd made me a similar offer about 15 years ago, I'd be farther out West right now, really ranching."

RIDES OUT HURRICANES

A friendly heifer ambled up behind us as we sat on the bench. She had her eye on her owner's straw hat. She rolled out her big tongue and prepared to help herself to a bite of the brim. James turned around, rescued his hat and said: "Gee whiz, cow!"

Hurricanes have never caused him too much concern. "I don't stay inside the house any more when it gets bad. I don't want all that timber down on me. Once I rode one out in my old truck, another one in that little shed." he pointed away from the woods and toward the prairie: "Most of the time I just put on my slicker and my hat and boots and walk out there a ways and sit beside a fence post and let it blow."

A BACHELOR

James has never married. "Well, my mother died when I was 19 and left my father with three younger children - much younger than myself. I helped him with them. I learned to cook and fix for them. At one time I even made the girls' dresses. I got to be a pretty good tailor."

How did James remain a bachelor?, he grinned: "There were many pretty girls around here to see me. But I kept on caring for my folks and before I knew it, I was too old to marry."

RADIO NO PLEASURE

The nearest thing to a modern appliance he ever bothered with was a butane stove. "I finally got rid of it. There's nothing like a good chunk fire. But I don't cook as much as I used to. My nieces and nephews come out every few days and bring a huge picnic dinner. We go down to the woods and pretend we're camping out."

Somewhere along the line of progress he owned a crystal radio set, but he said the way the world argued, it didn't afford him any pleasure.

HAD TRUCK ONCE

"My cow feed is sent out by truck, and that takes care of that." With a beautiful herd of 100, he lamented that he seems to be going back on his life's calling of cattle raising, saying: "I'm getting so I can't bear to part with these silly old cows. But I've sold many thousands of dollars worth back through the years. I haven't bought a cow since 1900."

TOO CRAMMED UP

His thoughts on American pleasure were these: "Folks don't know how to have a good time these days - even with movies and television and all that stuff. Families live so close together, all crammed up on a lot with their children arguing. A lot of trouble starts these days over children and dogs and those new kind of cats." New kinds of cats? He replied: "Yes, those Siamese cats. Why, back when I was young, we got together most every weekend and we really enjoyed seeing our neighbors. We had break-downs which lasted all night long. We'd dance until we were so wet with sweat we could barely stand up. Then along about midnight, Henry, my friend, would make about 15 gallons of coffee and we'd drink some whisky, eat some fried chicken and cake, and dance on 'til daybreak."

NOT FOR HIM

I asked James if he'd be interested in selling his property for \$5,000 an acre, as he has been offered, (a mere 1000 per cent increase) then maybe taking a nice trip around the world. He laughed until he almost upset the bench, and said: "Around the world! Heck, some mornings these days it takes me an hour to get up and out to the barn!"

The Need for Change By Lou Wheatcraft

Through out history the natural world has presented us with a model for dealing with change. Organizations similar to ABNC can learn a lot about how nature deals with change. As individuals we also need to learn these lessons so we can avoid the hazards and/or capitalize on opportunities brought about by change.

Charles Darwin documented his theory of biological evolution stating that plants and animals develop through natural selection of variations that increase the organism's ability to survive and reproduce. Nature is never constant, and always changing. Weather changes day-to-day, climate changes over the decades, competition increases at times and then may decrease, food may be plentiful and then there is famine, there may be a stretch of vast amounts of rainfall then drought.

Species that are able to adapt survive. Species that try to stay the same, try to maintain the status quo, species that fail to change, often become extinct.

Organizations are no different than nature when it comes to dealing with change. We all have noticed that the only thing we can be sure of is change and today the rate of change is constantly increasing. The one major challenge of all organizations is successfully dealing with change, being able to avoid the hazards of change while at the same time being able to capitalize on opportunities brought about by change.

Over the last eleven years since I have been a volunteer the population of this area has increased several times, the population has become much more aware and concern about environmental issues. Yet over this same time we are seeing a decrease in memberships and volunteer retention is getting worse even with positive steps to improve. During the week, more people drive by our entrance every day than visit Armand Bayou in the entire year!! Most visitors are first time. Many have lived in the area for several years and didn't know ABNC existed. Once people come, many don't return. I have heard many times people saying they walked the trails and didn't see anything. There must be something wrong. We need to make changes if we are going to survive.

As I see it, Armand Bayou is at a cross roads. We can ignore the changes around us, fight to maintain the status quo, and become extinct. Or we can recognize the changes around us, adapt to these changes, evolve, grow, and survive long in to the next millennium. The choice is ours.

We need to address several key parameters:

- 1) Should our thinking be bound with a non-profit mindset or should we expand our thinking and think more like a business?
- 2) Should we stay with a passive marketing strategy or should we be more proactive in our marketing approach?
- 3) Should our budget always just be to maintain what we have or should we build growth into the budget?

Each of these parameters forms a spectrum of choices. Combining these, one can develop possible future scenarios as to the end result or outcome based on the choices made. At one end of the spectrum is ABNC today, I would call that the "Status Quo" scenario. I believe this scenario would lead to a slow death. At the other end of the spectrum is a scenario I call the "New Beginnings" scenario. I believe choosing this scenario leads to a future of sustained growth for ABNC.

In this scenario, the Nature Center has abandoned the non-profit mindset and has adopted a more business like mindset where the competition is addressed and the visitor's expectations and experience are put first. In this scenario, most of the funding comes from revenues generated by the visitors. This is possible because the Nature Center has invested in improving the infrastructure by having a budget for growth. Improvements are included in the budget rather than relying on donations. With this approach, the visitor experience will be enhanced, giving the visitors a reason to return because we have met their expectations. Then, with a budget line item for marketing, the Nature Center can actively market the visitor experience made possible by the infrastructure improvements. This will result in an increase in visitors, repeat visitors, memberships, and volunteers. These increases will in-turn result in increased revenues which will allow for an expansion of services and further improvements in the infrastructure - a continuous upward spiral of growth.

Or in business terms: Develop a good product that addresses customer needs, package the product to meet customer expectations, and market the product such that the customer knows you have the product and where to get it. (They won't buy something if they don't know it exists!)

Last week I presented our vision statement. John Kotter stated in his book, Leading Change: "A great vision can serve a useful purpose even if it is understood by just a few key people. But the real power of a vision is unleashed only when most of those involved in an enterprise or activity have a common understanding of its goals and direction. That shared sense of a desirable future can help motivate and coordinate the kinds of actions that create transformations."

Which future do you want for ABNC? We all have to choose. And once you have chosen, you have to be actively involved in making that future become a reality.

What part can you play in making this scenario for the future come true? Get involved!! You can do this in several ways. First, is to keep an open mind when you see changes being made. Look at the big picture. How do you think the casual visitor would perceive the change?

Another thing you can do is become part of the change process. You can do this by becoming an active member of one of the planning committees and help determine which changes to make and how fast we implement these changes. If you don't feel you have time to be on a committee, then you can also be actively involved by attending volunteer and other member meetings when the plans for change are presented. At these meetings your comments will be listened to and included in the overall strategic plan.

Whatever your choice, get involved!! Welcome the change. I believe how we accept, react to, and take advantage of change is our key to long term sustainable growth.

Next Month

Next month I will write an article on change at the nature center as well in detail, as I feel some of the change going on is not all for the better.

Andrew Hamlett

Volunteer Appreciation Dinner at Outback Steakhouse

Volunteers at Bayou Boil, worked very hard behind the scenes, before and after the event to make everything go so well, resulting in a 30% increase over the previous year and netting ABNC approximately \$23,000. Special thanks to Judy & David Sharp, Eleanor & Steve Haskew, Eleanor & Henry Stanley, Don Shigekawa, Christine Ribeiro, Cris Santiago, Judy Huston, Ruby Dilgren, Joan Henderson, Cherry & Doug Barfoot, Christine Barrett, Joan & Paul Brunkow, Jonathan Perez, Tom Scarsella, Ed & Nora Roberts, Mary Yurkovich, Susan Williams, Mary Ann Tucker, Jennifer Bingel, Jane Bingel, Eric Duran, Ed Adams, Mark Kramer, Patrick Hayes, George Regmund, Jim Hawkins, Stephania Rogers, Georgia Colyer, Joe Clem, Jim & Diane McMahon, Andrew & Linda Hamlett, Patrick Wornick, Jim & Jana Callan, Lou Wheatcraft, Barbara Hill, Ann Brinly, Larry Newburn, and Martha Hood. We appreciate you!

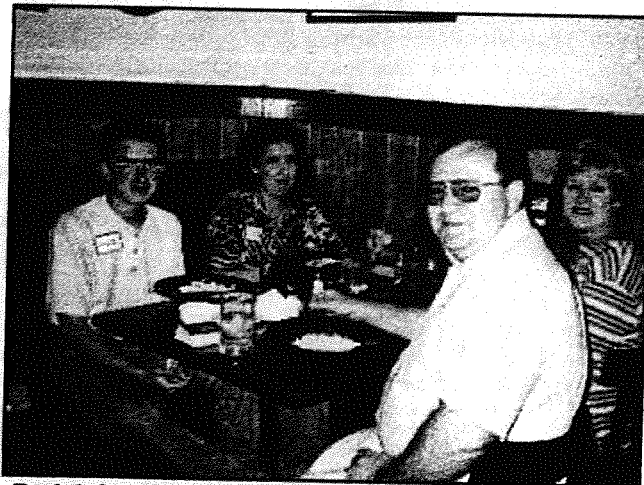
Charlotte Teeter, Hanna Drago, Carol Saxe, ABNC Trustees, and Lynn Shigekawa, Development Director.



Susan Williams wins a prize for a good suggestion about improving next year's *Bayou Boil* event.



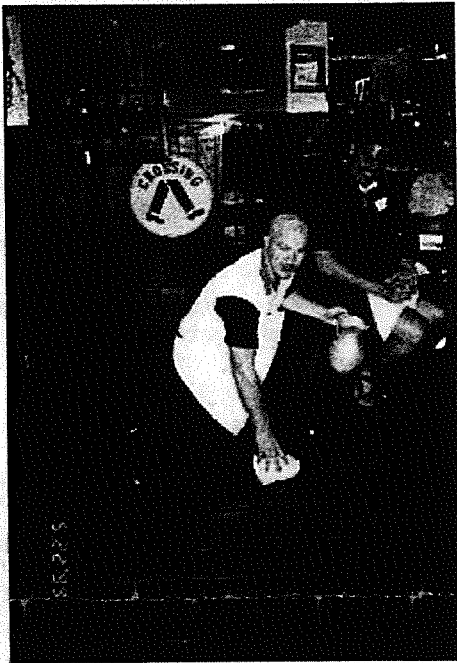
Christine Ribeiro shows off her prize for winning suggestion for improving next year's *Bayou Boil* event.



Back left to right: Andrew and Linda Hamlett,
Front left to right: Lou Wheatcraft, Susan Williams
enjoy a visit at the appreciation luncheon.



Left to right: Tom Scarsella, Hillary Gibbs, and Paul
Brunkow enjoy a nice visit after lunch.



Special Thanks to Gus Dunn for providing a delicious luncheon (including the famous blooming onions) for ABNC Bayou Boil Volunteers.



Pictured from left to right: Patrick Wornick, Ruby Dilgren, Martha Hood, Jim Hawkins, and Cris Santiago share V.I.P waiter stories after lunch.



Pictured from left to right: Joan Henderson, Ed Adams, Mary Yurkovich, and Stephania Rogers enjoy their delicious lunch.



From left to right: Christine Ribeiro, Jane Bingel, Henery and Eleanor Stanley, and Jennifer Bingel pictured have a good time.



Eleanor Haskew, Judy Sharp, David Sharp, and Steve Haskew discuss improvement ideas for next year's *Bayou Boil*.



From left to right: Doug & Cherry Barfoot, Diane McMahon, and Jim Callan during their lunch at Outback Steakhouse.

VOLUNTEER DUTY SCHEDULE - July 1999

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.

DATE	11:00 TRAIL	2:00 TRAIL	INFO. SERVICES	FARM INTER.	FARM DEMO	NAT. HISTORY DEMO
Sat. 7/3	--	Patty Pennington	Paul Brunkow	Christine Ribeiro	Ann Brinly (Robbin Lace)	Ruby Dilgren (Alligators)
Sun. 7/4	CLOSED	--	--	--	--	--
Sat. 7/10	Jim Crabb	Joe Bryan	Joan Shack	Jen & Dan Pelletier	Jane Bingel (Cheese)	Eleanor Stanley (Reptiles)
Sun. 7/11	--	Ray Parker	Martha Hood	Polly Swerdlin	Mary Ann Tucker (Basket Weaving)	Anne Tincher (Microworld)
Sat. 7/17	Louise Peck	--	Georgia Colyer	Jane Bingel	Irene Ward (Butter)	Louise Peck (Owls)
Sun. 7/18	--	Eldine Owens	Ken Russell	Cathy Jett Searcy	Stephania Rogers (Rope Making)	Tom Scarcella (Song Birds)
Sat. 7/24	Cris Santiago	Martha Hood	Ed & Nora Roberts	Eleanor Haskew	Susan Hesley (Yarn/Husk Dolls)	Patsy Cashion (Opossums)
Sun. 7/25	--	Stan Kraus	Joyce Roberts	Susan Williams	Patrick Wornick (Blacksmith)	Zel Arbuckle (Snakes)
Sat. 7/31	Ron Natole	--	Danny Yancey	Stephania Rogers	Irene Ward (Stereoptican)	Pat Doerr (Owls)

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

1999 VOLUNTEER BOARD

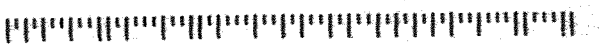
	Home	Office
Susan Williams Chair	281-487-3033	713-743-8863
Eric Duran Vice Chair	281-286-6764	Hanna Drago Admissions 281-326-4149
Linda Hamlett Secretary	281-487-1268	Polly Swerdlin Weekend Demos 281-488-8193
Georgia Colyer Treasurer	281-996-7888	Cris Santiago Weekend Trail 281-471-0979
Ken Russell Stewardship	281-488-0390	--Vacant-- Weekday Farm
Ruby Dilgren Interpretation	281-488-1727	Ed Adams Weekday Trail 713-946-2754
Jane Bingel Outreach	281-554-5069	Andrew Hamlett Newsletter 281-487-1268
		email: bachwblr@aol.com 281-998-7317/Fax

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