

Bayou Foliage

Vol. 17 No. 10 October 1999

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

October Calendar

Oct. 2	Stewardship Saturday (Start at 8:30 a.m.)
Oct. 3	Volunteer Board Meeting
Oct. 9	Volunteer Forum (10:00 a.m.)
Oct. 14	Volunteer Meeting (6:30 – 9:00 p.m.)
Oct. 14	Bayou Foliage deadline
Oct. 16	Stewardship Saturday (Start at 8:30 a.m.)
Oct. 29/30	Creepy Crawlers

ABNCV MEETING

NATURE CENTER AUDITORIUM

Thursday, October 14, 1999

6:30 - Snacks and Conversation:

Get to know one another 7:00 - Program:

Dr. Dawn Gouge - A Bug's Life in Houston

8:00 - Buisness Meeting

9:00 - Adjourn

This month, Dr. Dawn Gouge, a Texas A&M entomologist, will be speaking to us. Her talk is entitled "A Bug's Life in Houston", and will be covering the identification and natural histories of many species of Houston area insects. It should be interesting, so please join us.

DON'T FORGET TO MARK YOURS CALENDARS

VOLUNTEER FORUM: Saturday, October 9 FALL FESTIVAL 1999

Saturday, November 13 and Sunday, November 14

IT'S CREEPY CRAWLERS TIME!

ABNC's Halloween event, Creepy Crawlers, is coming up very soon. This fun event will be held on Friday October 29, and Saturday October 30, from 6-9:30 p.m. We need volunteer help in many areas of the event including: children's crafts (such as decorating your own Halloween mask), guides on the trail walks, hayrides, face painting, and much more.

We will also be decorating the Education Building and Farm Site the week before the event. During the day on the 29th we could use some help setting up and on Sunday the 31st we will be cleaning up.

If you can loan a battery powered lantern, it would really help us on the trail walks. Please have your name clearly marked on it.

If you can help on one or both of these nights, please call George or Kim at the Nature Center at (281) 474-2551 to sign up. This is really a fun event! Thanks a lot for all your help!

George Regmund

VOLUNTER OF THE MONTH

Each month an ABNC Volunteer is recognized for his of her outstanding service to the Nature Center. This month's special volunteer is Becky Brignac. She has worked for the Pasadena school district for 15 years. Back in 1988/1989 she protested against Pasadena city hall when they were trying to put a road through the area. After that she decided to volunteer at ABNC and continue her service to the community and the environment.

Becky completed training in the cold of February 1989 and has been a valuable asset ever since. She has been heavily involved with special events like "Down on the Farm" and is presently working on the Farm Festival planning committee. With her connections at the Pasadena school district she has helped the ABNC education department distribute information on our school group programs. Becky realizes the importance of conserving the wilderness here and environmental education, but Becky says what keeps her coming back to ABNC is the people she meets and the wonderful friends she has made.

Thank you, Becky, for your time and dedication. It is greatly appreciated!

Printing Compliments of Celanese

MINUTES: THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 9, 1999

Ed Adams presented a new podium for our auditorium to Ephriam Dickson. This was made possible by Shell Oil and Ed's "kids."

Susan announced that Jane Bingel was injured in a car accident on 09-8-99; she sustained a broken leg with multiple fractures.

Eric Duran introduced our speaker, John Forsythe, who gave a very enjoyable 1.5 hour program on cephalopods.

The business meeting was called to order by Susan Williams; the minutes of the August meeting published in the *Bayou Foliage* were approved. Since the last meeting, there has been a change: give address changes to Kim instead of to Ruby. Georgia Colyer was absent, but she left word that the error in the checking beginning balance in the Treasurer's Report of August 99 has been corrected. The current checking balance is 2116.11; the current savings are 616.49, for total assets of 2732.60.

Eric announced the Geology and Paleontology class of the Bay Area by Ephriam Dickson on September 11, 1999. At the October meeting, we will have Dawn Gouge who will present "A Bug's Life in Houston." The October CE class will be a study skin preparation class by Dennis Jones of Brazos Bend State Park. The November CE class will be Fire Ecology by Colin Shackleford. In the December CE class, John Tveten will talk on the Butterflies and Moths of Houston; the public will be invited.

Kim announced Dick Benoit as the Volunteer of the Month for September; Becky Brignac is the Volunteer of the Month for October. Let Kim know if you can fill in for Jane Bingel for training on farm demos. The next volunteer training will run from October 6 to Thanksgiving. Thanks to Eleanor Stanley, Geri Ross, and Shirley Potter for helping with the mailings. Kim is working on a new volunteer interest survey for the volunteer database and volunteer handbook. Kim is scheduling the weekday farm life classes. See the sign up sheets for Fall Festival and Creepy Crawlers. Log your volunteer hours by the end of the month.

Kim gave the stewardship report for Mark. There were 100 volunteers at Marsh Bash; it was the biggest volunteer restoration project ever. The Marsh Grant ends at the end of September.

Susan announced the Volunteer Forum on October 9. The forum will give an overview of the roles of staff, trustees, and volunteers. George Regmund will report on future plans for the Nature Center. Representatives from the following Board of Trustees committees will speak: Facilities, Stewardship, Education. Speakers for the Finance and Public Perception committees won't be represented. Changes in the volunteer training program will be presented.

Volunteer retention will be discussed. Andrew Hamlett will be the timekeeper to keep the meeting moving on schedule.

Susan thanked Ruby Dilgren for her help in getting the Nominating Committee together. The members are: Eleanor Stanley, Marjorie Borey, Jim Edwards, Joan Henderson, and Stephania Rogers.

Becky Brignac announced the Fall Festival Committee meetings on some Sundays at 2pm in September and October. We are in a bind because of Jane Bingel's accident. Polly Swerdlin will assist. Anyone else who can, please do so. Hours go under Events.

Marjorie Borey gave a preview of the Volunteer Quilt. It will be queen size this year. We made \$1473.00 on the quilt last year. We need your help in selling tickets. The \$20.00 packets are in the Kaneka building. A picture is included. Tickets are \$1.00 each or 6 tickets for \$5.00.

A visitor, Matt Michel, an employee at NASA, announced his case study of volunteer activities and their impact on public perception. He will tag along on events and walks; if you see someone taking notes, that will be him. He will target new visitors to ABNC. He will interview visitors and volunteers; he is is open to input on how to taylor the research that he will conduct on weekends over the next few months. The meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted, Linda Hamlett

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Ramon McKinney	Oct. 3
Deborah Ritter	Oct. 5
Kevin Casement	Oct. 6
Susan Williams	Oct. 6
Joan Henderson	Oct. 6
Becky Brignac	Oct. 7
Bill Howe	Oct. 15
Colleen Ecord	Oct. 18
Jim Wilson	Oct. 18
Joyce Roberts	Oct. 20
Jennifer Bingel	Oct. 25
Carolyn Sue Manley	Oct. 27
Dewanna Norris	Oct. 30
Bob Hendrix	Oct. 30
Bill Stephens	Oct. 30

If your birthday is incorrect or not listed, please leave a note in the *Bayou Foliage* mail slot. I realize some volunteers are not being listed, I'm very sorry about that, starting next month we will finally have an updated copy of the volunteer birthday roster.



FALL FESTIVAL

ITS THAT TIME AGAIN

Our annual Fall Festival will be held on November 13 and 14 and we need lots and lots of help from everyone to make this event an enjoyable and fun one. Sign up sheets are in the Volunteer Office for the various activities. The time slots are for 2 ½ hours so you can work and have time to see the festival as well.

Upcoming planning meetings for this event are scheduled for October 3, 17 and November 7 all at 2 p.m. at the Nature Center. Please attend if you would like to chair an area of operations at the festival or help us in putting this major event together

Several areas of need for the festival include:

- Ice Chests: if you could loan us your cooler for the festival it would be a big help. Plan to bring it the week of the event.
- We need 32 oz. tinned steel fruit cans for candle dipping (the kind tomato and grapefruit juice come in). Bring them to George's office. We could use 20 of them.
- Crock Pots
- Large Coffee Pots
- Galvanized Wash Tubs

Also, remember the Saturday night Bar-B-Que Dinner for volunteers and crafts people on November 13th. PRE-REGISTRATION IS NEEDED with payment so we can have an idea of how many plates we should order. The sign up sheet will be in the Volunteer Office. Please sign the list and deposit your money in the attached envelope.

There will be lots of setting up to do the day before the event and lots of cleaning up to do on the Monday after. It would be great if you can help us on these days as well. This will just be hard work setting up tables and chairs, moving hay bales, preparing equipment for demonstrating, etc.

Thank you all so much for the great effort you provide to make Fall Festival a success!

George Regmund

OTHER BUISNESS

Another volunteer training session will be taking place, with orientation being on October 6th. Also, we are looking for a Weekday Farm Coordinator, to schedule classes. Any participants would be greatly appreciated. Thank you.

SIGN-UP INFORMATION

As many of you know, Jane Bingel has been slowed down due to an auto accident, so I am trying to fill one of her many jobs; finding people to fill the slots for this event. Please look through the following list and sign up either at the Volunteer Office in the Heiman House or call the Subchair in charge. There are 3 sessions each day: 9:30-noon, noon - 2:30, and 2:30-5pm. Nearly every job needs at least one more person to sign up, if not several.

Admission	Christine Ribiero
Butter Making	Martha Hood
Candle Making	Alan Wenger & Cathy Jett
Children's Crafts	
 Christmas Ornament 	Helen Harger
• Quilt	Cynthia Jennings
 Seed Mosaic 	Patsy Cashion
 Yarn Dolls 	Marsha Goss
Children's Games	Jen & Dan Pellitier
Cup Cake Walk	Penny Woodward
Cookies	Stephania Rogers
Farm Interpreter	Susan Hesley & Paula Thorsen
Food Booth	Jim & Jana Callan
Hay Baling	Lou Wheatcraft
Hoe Cakes	Pat Doerr
Hosting	Barb Hill
Ice Cream	Polly Swerdlin
Information Booth	Shirley & Drew Potter
Pie Eating Contest	Cris Santiago
Rope Making	Katerina Grundy
Scarecrow Making	Kristen Knoedler
Soap Making	Joyce Wade
Shingle Making	Tom Scarsella
Sugar Cane Press	Jim Edwards
Sugar Cane Selling	Shawn Mazette
Syrup Making	Roland Borey
Cashier	Christine Barrett
Telephone	Linda & Andrew Hamlett

As you can see, there is a lot going on, we're going to need nearly every volunteer pitching in. Some of the jobs will require a short training session, especially if you have never done it before. As the Nature Center schedule is already so busy, we are asking each sub-chair to cover any training needed, perhaps getting together at someone's home.

Fran Cognata & Hillary Gibbs

Merle Bunde

If you cannot reach the sub-chair or make it out to the Heiman House soon, feel free to e-mail me, Polly Swerdlin, (pfollyred@ghg.net) or call me at work 281-280-5481, usually Mon-Fri 8am-5pm. It's my personal number, and if I'm not there, no one else answers it.

Attention Fall Festival Sub-Chairs:

Washday

Traffic

The Fall Festival Committee will be having a final meeting to iron out any wrinkles the Sunday before our Event; November 7 and would like to see as many of you join us as possible at 3:00 p.m. for a chance to talk it over.

VOLUNTEER FORUM

10:00 A.M., SATURDAY, OCTOBER 9, 1999

ABNC AUDITORIUM

THIS IS YOUR OPPORTUNITY TO PRESENT YOUR IDEAS FOR IMPROVING THE ABNC VOLUNTEER PROGRAM.

PLEASE JOIN THE NATURE CENTER'S
VOLUNTEERS, STAFF, AND TRUSTEES AS WE
DISCUSS OUR PROGRAM, OUR ROLE AT THE
NATURE CENTER AND FUTURE PLANS FOR
ABNC.

(WE WILL BE MEETING INTO THE AFTERNOON, SO PLEASE FEEL FREE TO BRING YOUR LUNCH.)

STEWARDSHIP NEWS

The fringe marsh part of the marsh restoration project was completed on September 4 with a final planting of 12 smooth cordgrass plants on restoration site number three. This part of the project established 2.6 acres of smooth cordgrass (Spartina alterniflora) and California bulrush (Juncus californicus) on four fringe marsh sites exceeding the project target. Volunteers worked 11 consecutive weekends to help accomplish the work. Jamie Schubert provided us with some excellent leadership, and it will be sad to see him leave us in the near future as the project wraps up. I think the volunteer effort provided here demonstrates that if there is focused and rewarding stewardship work to be done, volunteers will show up consistently, and on non-scheduled weekends to get the work accomplished.

As I mentioned in a previous issue of the *Bayou Foliage*, I am the volunteer member on the Board of Trustees Stewardship Committee and promised to keep you informed of its activity. I attended my second meeting on August 18. We reviewed a draft of an interim Resource Management Plan for stewardship of the ABNC ecosystems. This interim plan will go into the ABNC Business Plan due out this fall. The committee will continue to work on a longer term plan in the next few months. Mark Kramer also provided a draft of a methodology that could be used in the future as a guide for the types of mitigation that could be pursued for ABNC.

Ken Russell

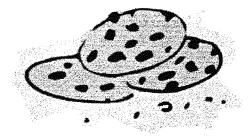
TIME TO BAKE COOKIES

Plans for Fall Festival (where did the Summer go) are underway and we hope to raise funds for the Volunteer Organization to use throughout the year.

You know what that means? Of course, the Volunteer Cookie sale! Everyone loves cookies and will buy them if we bake them. Once again I am asking you to bake any kind of cookies; brownies included, and bring them to the festival to sell.

Thank you in advance; you always help!

Stephania Rogers



FROM THE VOLUNTEER OFFICE

With the start of the 1999 school year, Volunteer training, Creepy Crawlers, and the Fall Festival, this is a very busy time of the year. On behalf of ABNC, thank you for all your participation, organizing and preparing. Because of your time and dedication this should be a great fall season.

I have had a chance in the last month to put faces with volunteers I have talked to on the phone. I just wanted to say it has been a pleasure meeting everyone, and thanks for all the wonderful advice. Let me know if I can do anything to make your volunteer experience here at ABNC more enjoyable. Thank you.

Kim Wasserman

ENVIRONMENTAL NOTEBOOK Sustainability, Part 2 by Lou Wheatcraft

This article is a continuation of a series that looks into key aspects of what it means to have a sustainable future.

The first area I am going to discuss concerns changes that need to be made in our basic way of measuring economic success. To address this issue there is an new, evolving economic way of thinking (now called "Ecological Economics", with concepts such as "Natural Capital") which accounts for "ecological services" as the basis for all cost accounting in regards to the use of natural resources. Hopefully, this new economic model will result in the retiring of the obsolete current economic model reflected by the Gross Domestic Product (GDP).

But before I do this I must cover a very basic concept that underlies our current economic way of thinking. This concept is referred to as "The Tragedy of the Commons."

The "Tragedy of the Commons" scenario was first written about by an amateur mathematician named William Forster Lloyd in 1833. Garrett Hardin, a Professor of Human Ecology at the University of California, Santa Barbara included this scenario in several articles in 1968 and in his book, "Living Within Limits," in 1993.

The tragedy of the commons develops in this way. Picture a common pasture open to all members of the community to graze their livestock there. The pasture has a certain carrying capacity - It can support only a given maximum number of cattle, going beyond which will result in a decline in the production of grass as well as a failure to meet the minimum amount of food for each individual cow.

Current economic theory expects that each herdsman will try to keep as many cattle as possible on the commons. Such an arrangement may work reasonably well for centuries because of tribal wars, poaching, and disease keep the numbers of man and animals well below the carrying capacity of the land. Finally, however, comes the day of reckoning, that is the long-desired goal of social stability becomes a reality - the maximum number of cattle the land can support is reached. At this point, the inherent logic of the commons generates "tragedy."

As a rational being, each herdsman seeks to maximize his gain (at minimum costs to himself.) He asks, "What is the utility (benefit) to me of adding one more animal to my herd?" This utility has one

positive and one negative aspect. The positive is the addition of one more animal from which the herdsman will receive all the proceeds from the sale of the animal. The negative aspect is a function of the additional overgrazing created by one more animal. Since, however, the consequences of overgrazing are shared by all of the herdsman, the negative aspect to the individual herdsman is only a fraction of the total impact.

(Note that it pays a private land owner to not put too many cattle on his land because he will himself have to assume all of the loss that comes from over grazing.)

Considering the benefit to the individual herdsman versus the costs, the herdsman will conclude the only sensible thing to do is to add another animal to his herd. And another, and another, and From his point of view he would reason: "The more cows I have, the better off I will be. Feeding them is free, so I will increase the size of my herd as fast as I can."

The tragedy is that this conclusion is reached by every rational herdsman sharing the commons - a situation which each individual is powerless to avoid. Each man is locked into a system that compels him to increase his herd without limit - in a world that is limited. With continued overgrazing, the costs grow greater each year as the cattle now eat the grass faster than it can grow back. When there is no more grass left, the cows will then crop the remaining grass right down to the ground, killing the plants and leaving nothing but bare dirt. Then weeds replace grass and the soil is eroded away. Soon the cows are all starving, and the entire village is faced with bankruptcy and possible starvation.

Notice that it does no good for any on villager to voluntarily limit the size of his herd. If he refrains from putting more cows on the pasture, he simply leaves more grass for his neighbors' cattle, and increases the incentive for each of them to add still more. As a result, his unselfish action will not prevent the disaster, and he will be poorer in the meantime. Since each herdsman can see that it would be pointless to hold back, each one adds as many cows as he can until the disaster occurs.

That being so, one might suppose that rational herdsman who were aware of all the facts would change their policies and reduce the size of their herds. But in the tragedy of the commons, this is not so. The remarkable thing about this situation is that if each person makes the most sensible decision from his own point of view, the result is that everyone ends up much worse off. Under a system of commonized pasture plus private herds, each rational herdsman is rewarded for doing the wrong thing!

The "tragedy" of the commons is that the disaster is inevitable as long as the original rule of the commons is used. But if everyone agrees to give up some individual freedom to the larger system—the village as a whole—the disaster can be averted and the everyone is better off as a result. In today's society, government passes laws that limit "the size of the herds".

Now consider just what areas of our country and the world are "commons." The lakes, rivers, oceans, aquifers, and the atmosphere are all "commons". Getting a bigger fish harvest gives the fisherman immediate benefits while sharing the consequences of over fishing among all the other fisherman. Polluting the lakes, rivers, oceans, and atmosphere provides the polluter an immediate benefit in not having to include the cost of the pollutants in his product line while sharing the consequences with the total population. Finally, individuals over pumping water from the aquifers get the immediate benefit of water for irrigation, drinking, etc. while not having to worry about the future consequences of depleting the aquifer.

Our, and the world's, economic system is based on the freedom of the commons. Companies choose their installed capacity and input and output mix so as to maximize their profits. There are two implications of this behavior: 1) no stone will be left unturned that will increase the company' profit, and 2) no actions or projects are undertaken that lower profits. But this profit maximizing is not in the best interest of the public. Companies tend to overexploit costless inputs - water and air (in the case of the herdsman - grass) that are not privately owned, or at least not given value by being traded in the market place.

Many of today's environmental laws address this problem and make pollution a part of the profit equation. With these laws, the goal is to change the rules such that to increase profit, the companies must reduce pollution. But national laws are not binding internationally. To address the global commons' problems, international laws need to be agreed to. In terms of the ozone "hole" issue, this has been largely successful. But in terms of reducing CO2 emissions to slow down global warming, the politics are complicated and it is doubtful any meaningful agreements will be made. However, even this pales in significance when we start talking about world population and the carrying capacity of the planet!

Another major problem with the current economic system related to the tragedy of the commons is how we measure economic success. Under the current economic system, our natural resources are not assigned a value. A forest has no value until it is cut, then the lumber has value because it can be bought and sold and used to make houses which can be bought and sold. If the herdsman had to pay for the grass their herds consumed along with a share of the costs of damage caused by overgrazing, they would more likely optimize their herd size for sustainability rater than try to maximize profits.

In next month's article, I will discuss an evolving economic paradigm (now called "Ecological Economics", with concepts such as "Natural Capital") which accounts for "ecological services" as the basis for all cost accounting in regards to the use of natural resources.

Bibliography:

- "Industrial Ecology and Global Change", edited by Socolow, Andrews, Berkhout, & Thomas, Cambridge Press, 1994
- 2. "Living Within Limits", Garrett Hardin, Oxford Press, 1993
- "The Environmental Ethics & Policy Book", VanDeVeer, Pierce, 2nd Edition, Wadsworth Publishing, 1998
- 4. "Systems 1, an Introduction to Systems Thinking", Draper Kauffmann, Jr., Future System

RAFFLE QUILT

The 1999 raffle quilt, hand made by ABNC volunteers, is a knockout. The quilt is made up of 28 squares of stylized bluebonnets, alternating with 28 nine-patch squares. Each square is different but the overall effect is blue. This is a large quilt, 95 \times 108. The back of the quilt is decorated with 2 bluebonnet squares and a patched map of Texas, each ecological zone, a different color.

The quilt will be on display in the Kaneka building every weekend beginning the first week of October. The drawing will take place at the Yuletide Market event on December 4, 1999. The ticket price is \$1.00 each or 6 tickets for 5.00. Make checks payable to Armand Bayou Nature Center.

VOLUNTEER DUTY SCHEDULE - OCTOBER 1999

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 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 Sunday with someone who has the same duty another time during the month. If you do trade, please be sure to call the appropriate

Please note, because of the recent hours change at the nature center, all demo's, farm interpretation, and information services being done on

DATE	H	11:00 TPATT	AR 00.0				
		TENT COLLE	Z:00 TRAIL	INFO. SERVICES	FARM INTER.	FARM DEMO	NAT. HISTODY DEWO
Sat.	10/2	Jim Crabb	Melanie Weisman	Joseph Obest			OWAL DEMO
				oogii Silack	Eleanor Stanley		Bulker Dillower
Sun. 10/3	10/3	4 6	Stanley Krauhs	Martha Hood	o de la companya de l		(Bats)
ta C	Sat 10,00				Salidy Parker	Tom Scarcella	Christine Ribeiro
	10/03	Kamon McKinney		Danny Yancey	Paula Thorson	(Wood Shop)	(White-tailed Deer)
Sun.	Sun. 10/10	1.	Stanlev Krauhs	Dani Denne Jenne		(Rope Making)	Zel Arbuckie (Rentijes)
				i adi Di diikow	Polly Swerdlin	Mary Ann Tucker	Please Of
Sat.	Sat. 10/16	Louise Peck	Rav Parker	Joan Bendaman		(Basket Weaving)	(Allipators)
				comi riemael som	Chris Bingham	Stephania Rogers	Cathy Seamy 1044
Sun.	Sun. 10/17	W. F.	Stanlev Krambs	Von Directi		(Stereoscope)	(Snakes)
				Well Mussell	Marjorie Borey	Larry Veale	Anno Whiches
Sat.	Sat. 10/23	Michael & Eldine	Cris Santiago			(Indian Crats)	(Microworld)
		Owens	Samme	Cinistine Naspinski	Janet Miller	Irene Ward	Date: Cartifact
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55	TO 1707 97					(Wood Stove)	

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

1999 VOLUNTEER BOARD

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