

Bayou Foliage

August, 2001

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

Vol. 20, No. 8

LOOKING AHEAD

August

- 2 Volunteer Board Meeting, 6pm
- 4 Yarn Doll Training, 1-4pm
- 4 Garden Day-Frmhse 8:30am
- 7 Deadline -*Bayou Foliage*, 4pm
- 9 Volunteer Meeting, 6:30pm
Topic: Galapagos Islands
- 15 Vol. Orientation, 6:30-9pm
- 18 Garden Day-Frmhse 8:30am
- 18 Volunteer Training begins

September

- Garden Days-Farmhouse, 9am
- 6 Volunteer Board Meeting, 6pm
Connections Committee, 7pm
- 11 Deadline-*Bayou Foliage*, 4pm
- 13 Volunteer Meeting, 6:30pm
- 15 Garden Days-Farmhouse, 9am
- 22 Volunteer Training ends

October

- 4 Volunteer Board Meeting, 6pm
- 6 Garden Days-Farmhouse, 9am
- 9 Deadline-*Bayou Foliage* 4pm
- 11 Volunteer Meeting, 6:30pm
- 20 Breakfast w/ the Birds 7-10am
- 20 Garden Days-Farmhouse, 9am
- 26 Creepy Crawlers
- 27 Creepy Crawlers

November

- 3 Garden Days-Farmhouse, 9am
- Fall Festival
- 11 Fall Festival
- 17 Garden Days-Farmhouse, 9am

VOLUNTEER MEETING

- Date: August 9
- Time: 6:30 pm - Refreshments
7:00 pm - Program:
Galapagos Islands
8:00 pm - Business Meeting

The Galapagos Islands

We are very fortunate to have Helen Hodges as our program speaker for the August 9th Volunteer Meeting. Helen is the current president of the ABNC Board of Trustees and a world traveler. She will be presenting a slide program

on the flora and fauna of the Galapagos Islands. For those who don't know, these islands are located in the Pacific Ocean off the coast of South America. They are famous as the place where Charles Darwin did much of the research for his book, *The Origin of Species*. Marine iguanas and Darwin's finches are just two examples of the unique species that evolved on these remote islands. Helen's program promises to be colorful and informative.

—Stan Krauhs

VOLUNTEER OF THE MONTH

Each month an ABNC Volunteer is recognized for his or her outstanding service to the Nature Center. This month's special volunteer is *Ann Brinly*. Ann is originally from Kentucky. She worked in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit at a hospital in Louisville, Kentucky. When she became pregnant with her first son she decided to dedicate her time to her family, husband, Bob Brinly, and eventually two sons. The Brinly family moved back and forth between Tennessee and Houston because of Bob's job. Finally they decided to stay put in the Clear Lake area about 10 years ago. Bob Brinly was on the ABNC Board of Trustees, he saw a listing for volunteers and suggested it to Ann. Ann really liked it and quickly fit in.

When Ann was told she was going to be the volunteer of the month this month, she replied in her Kentucky accent, "Oh no, I've already done that." Ann has been volunteer of the month and volunteer of the year before and she continues to come through for ABNC. Ann is involved in many aspects of the Nature Center, but she showed her true loyalty when she spent from 6 a.m. until 5 p.m., Saturday, June 9th helping the staff save the Bayou Ranger pontoon boat in chest high water during Tropical Storm Allison. What a trooper! Her help was greatly appreciated, not to mention everything else she does. Thanks, Ms. Brinly.

—Kim Wasserman
 Volunteer Coordinator

BUSINESS REPORTS

MINUTES OF THE JULY 12, 2001 VOLUNTEER MEETING

The Volunteer Meeting was called to order by Ed Adams at 7:45 p.m. The Minutes of the June meeting were approved.

Treasurer, Ken Russell, reported that the EcoCamp scholarship was funded for less than anticipated and budgeted for.

Stan Krauhs, Vice Chair, reported that August's speaker would be Helen Hodges. He also announced that the sign-up sheet for continuing education, which is usually passed around at volunteer meetings, has been discontinued. Volunteers only have to record their continuing education hours in the volunteer book.

Laura Bradley, Weekday Outdoor Education, no report.

Stephania Rogers, Weekday Farm, said demos are covered.

Ruby Dilgren, Weekday Trails, was absent, but Ed Adams reported that she continues to fill the trail guide slots.

Eldine Owens, Weekend Demos, needs a couple of slots filled.

Dottie Evans, Outreach, said that currently Outreach is in hiatus.

Jane Bingel, Interpretations & Front Desk Greeters, reported that the front desk is covered.

Jim Callan, Stewardship. Mark Kramar reported on Stewardship. Water hyacinth control is underway having started July 11th. A plan for control was developed in 1997, which calls for maintenance of the hyacinth on a small scale. Mark

explained that to treat very large areas at once creates ecological disturbances that are very hard on other types of living things in the water.

Widgeon grass planting continues every Stewardship Saturday. ABNC has received \$7,000 from Reliant Energy to help with prairie restoration. Trees will be removed from the area south of the prairie platform. The trees near the entrance of the Grimes Prairie will be chemically controlled.

A comprehensive Management Plan is being developed which addresses how the prairie, the bayou, and the forest will be handled and maintained. When completed, Mark will bring the plan to a volunteer meeting and share it with the volunteers.

Christine Hiscox, Admissions, reported that the Admissions desk is covered.

Bayou Foliage: Molly Ganter will take over the layout of the Foliage. This will free up Irene Ward to carry classes in the fall.

Kim Wasserman, Staff, announced that the Volunteer of the Month is Ann Brinly.

- EcoCamp has had 500 attendees.
- Trail signs will be up in a couple of weeks.
- The pole barn is being worked on.
- The restrooms are being worked on.
- August 4th is Kim's last day at ABNC.

Kim's position has been redefined. The following positions will be created and filled:

- Part-time Volunteer Coordinator;
- Full-time Education

Coordinator/Animal Manager and

- Part-time Animal Caretaker.

Upcoming Calendar of Events:

Fall Festival: Ed Adams asked for old wooden canoes (boats) that can be paddled around May's Pond for effect. He is building a beech bark canoe. He also asked for old wooden boats that can be put on the island along with the beech bark canoe. This will be a display that will be viewed from a distance.

Polly Swerdlin reported that the majority of chair positions for Fall Festival have been filled. Polly Explained that the year 1918 is the focus of Fall Festival in order to show the impact of WWI on the United States and how it began to change the farmer's way of life.

- Helpers are still needed, and in a couple of months recruiting will escalate.
 - The newsletter will give times and dates for demo training.
 - The Model T Club is bringing a couple of vehicles for people to look at.
 - The Women's League of Voters will be here as suffragettes to portray trying to get the vote for women.
 - Army recruiters will be "recruiting" for WWI.
 - Fall Festival Costumes are long skirts at mid-calf or just above ankle. Dark cotton. Long sleeve shirts/blouses.
 - Placards will be placed along the boardwalk to build the theme as people enter the grounds.
- Jane Bingel announced that the volunteers would have a booth that

**ARMAND BAYOU NATURE CENTER VOLUNTEERS
TREASURER'S REPORT
JULY 2001**

| | |
|--|-------------------------|
| BEGINNING BALANCE | \$2856.34 |
| EXPENDITURES: | |
| POSTAGE - BAYOU FOLIAGE (JUNE 2001) | \$31.00 |
| BANK SERVICE CHARGE | 2.00 |
| TOTAL EXPENDITURES | \$33.00 |
| INCOME: | -0- |
| TOTAL INCOME | \$ 0.00 |
| CURRENT BALANCE | <u>\$2823.34</u> |

will sell articles created by volunteers. The monies generated will go to the volunteer organization. Fall Festival will have radio and newspaper coverage. Jane will need volunteers to pass out fliers to libraries and other places around the bay area.

Unfinished Business: none

New Business: none.

The meeting adjourned at 8:30

p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Irene Ward, Secretary

**FROM THE
VOLUNTEER OFFICE**

To The ABNC Volunteers:

I wanted to thank all the volunteers for their kind words and support

August 4th will be my last day as an ABNC staff member. Keep up the great work; ABNC is lucky to have you all.

concerning my career path. I have enjoyed working closely with all of

you. August 4th will be my last day as an ABNC staff member. I have a couple of options I am considering for my future career endeavors at this time. I do, however, expect that I will continue to help ABNC with its mission as a volunteer or a camp teacher in the future.

Keep up the great work; ABNC is lucky to have you all.

—Kim Wasserman



EVENTS

BREAKFAST WITH THE BIRDS

Cost: \$20.00 per person
Date: Oct. 20, 2001
Time: 7-10 a.m.
Reservations required
Leader: Pat Doerr

Again the volunteers are being offered an opportunity to go birding at ABNC. Come join your fellow volunteers on October 20, 2001 and hike the grounds and discover the migratory birds that should be around.

After two hours of birding, led by volunteer Pat Doerr, return to the farm house for an old-fashioned breakfast. The breakfast menu consists of O.J., sausage, eggs, pancakes, home-baked biscuits, freshly churned butter, tea and coffee. Here's an opportunity for you to meet your fellow volunteers and get to know each other.

We can accommodate only 12 people so make your reservations soon. Reservations must be made by October 13, 2001. There will be a sign-up envelope in the Volunteer Office or you can call Jane Bingel at 281-554-5069.

FALL FESTIVAL VOLUNTEER BOOTH

It is time to start getting your ideas together and working on what you would like to sell at the Fall Festival Volunteer Booth. As a reminder, this money will help raise money for the Volunteer Budget, and is in addition to selling cook-

ies. If you have some talent in the areas of blacksmithing, woodworking, basket weaving, tatting, crocheting, and drawing or painting, we would love to sell your creations at the booth. Some other crafts or hobbies can also include pottery, cornhusk dolls, birdhouses, soap, candles, photos, and plants. Remember these items should be

If you have some talent in the areas of blacksmithing, woodworking, basket weaving, tatting, crocheting, drawing or painting, we would love to sell your creations at the booth.

appropriate to the Nature Center and not compete with the other Fall Festival vendors.

If you are interested in helping out in the plant category, the Ways and Means Committee is interested in selling plants such as herbs that were used in farm life. A great idea would be selling an herb that is used in baking goods. Also, cuttings from native plants in your own yard and that attract butterflies, birds, etc. is another possibility. Some plant holders are available if you need any.

Remember, Fall Festival is November 10-11, 2001. If you have any other ideas, we would love to hear from you. Please call Jane Bingel at 281-554-5069 with any questions or ideas you might have.

Here's to a great Fall Festival!

—*Martha Hood*

FALL FESTIVAL PLANNING

Contact Polly Swerdlin:
pfollyred@yahoo.com, or
(281) 814-4606 (cell phone;
leave a message; I will
be paged)

I know it's only August, but that leaves us with only three months left to plan ABNC's biggest event, Fall Festival. Jane Bingel and I have already called a lot of volunteers to either Chair an activity or sign up to help. If we haven't yet reached you, rest assured we will. If you have access to email and would rather we use it than a phone call, please use my address above to let us know. I am getting to be a fan of this modern tool for communication. This Festival is going to be lots of fun, folks, and you will love being a part of it!!

Thanks for your time.

—*Polly Swerdlin*



OVER AND OUT...

Solvay Polymers has generously donated 50 two-way radios to ABNC. They have included extra batteries, microphones, and 3x8 unit chargers. These radios will be a tremendous help for our special events, stewardship projects, EcoCamp, trails, and daily communications.

Solvay and ABNC have in

It is VERY IMPORTANT to follow these instructions regarding the batteries. A battery should not be recharged until it is completely discharged, dead, nothing.

Use a system for proper accounting/tracking, storage/recharge and maintenance in order to extend the life of these radios. The radios have been reprogrammed to our ABNC channel. Please help ABNC treat this valuable donation with the care that it deserves.

Stan Krauhs (an ABNC volunteer and life member) helped us in securing these radios. Stan explains that the following information is important for all staff and volunteers to know:

These radios are 5-10 years old and in good condition. It is VERY IMPORTANT to follow these instructions regarding the batteries. A battery should not be recharged until it is completely discharged, dead, nothing. Then it can be recharged. DO NOT recharge it or "top it off" after each use. If you

think it will die during a particular use, take a spare battery and use the one in the radio until it goes dead. If in doubt, leave the radio turned on overnight to discharge it.

I cannot stress enough how important it is to follow these instructions to obtain the optimum life from the batteries. As they need repair, you may not be able to obtain parts and may have to use some of the other radios for parts as required.

Thank you. Over and out.

—Lynn Shigekawa

NOTES

Remember to take precautions during this extremely hot weather. Don't forget to wear a hat, sunscreen, and take it easy during the hottest part of the day. Most importantly, drink plenty of water.

After the Volunteer Board Meeting on Thursday September 6th Helen Hodges, President of the ABNC Board of Trustees, will conduct a meeting with the Volunteer Board to discuss common Center issues. This is a meeting of the Connections Committee. The Connections Committee has been created as an avenue of communication between the two boards to exchange ideas towards building a better nature center. These meetings will be held quarterly and the Volunteer Board solicits your input on these meetings.

You will notice new trail markers on the trails. These markers

help denote trails by symbols and color codes.

Look for updates on the ABNC web page: www.abnc.org.

LEARN TO MAKE A YARN DOLL

Date: August 4, 2001

Time: 1 - 4 p.m.

Yarn dolls are fun! Kids love them! They are one of the favorite activities at Fall Festival, and we need lots of volunteers to help the kids make them.

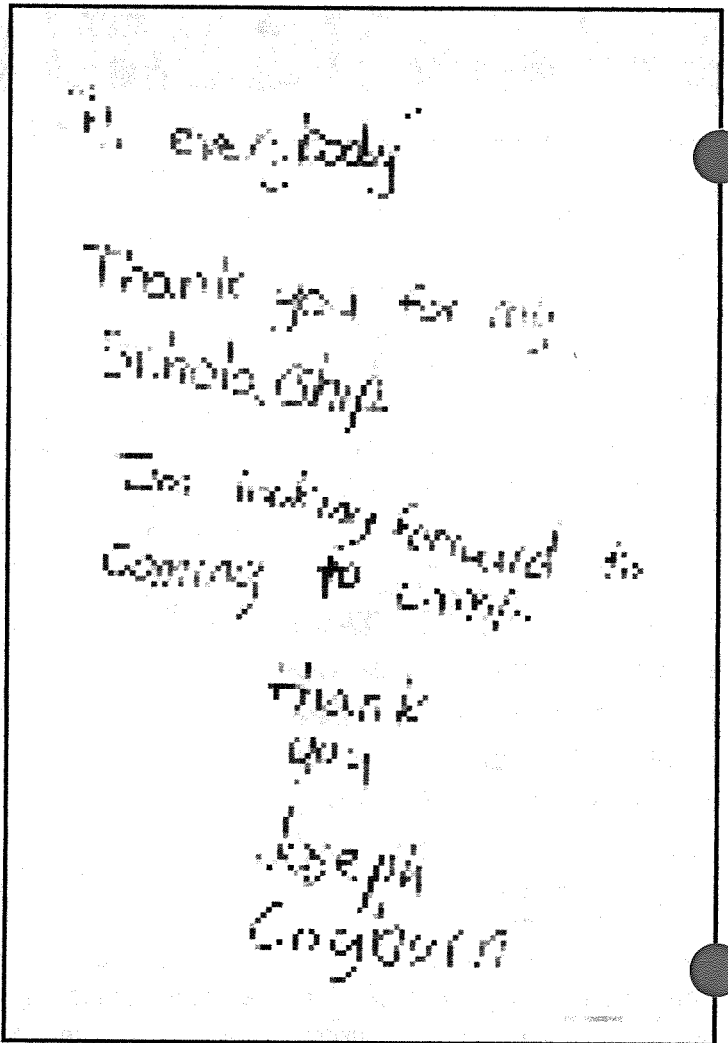
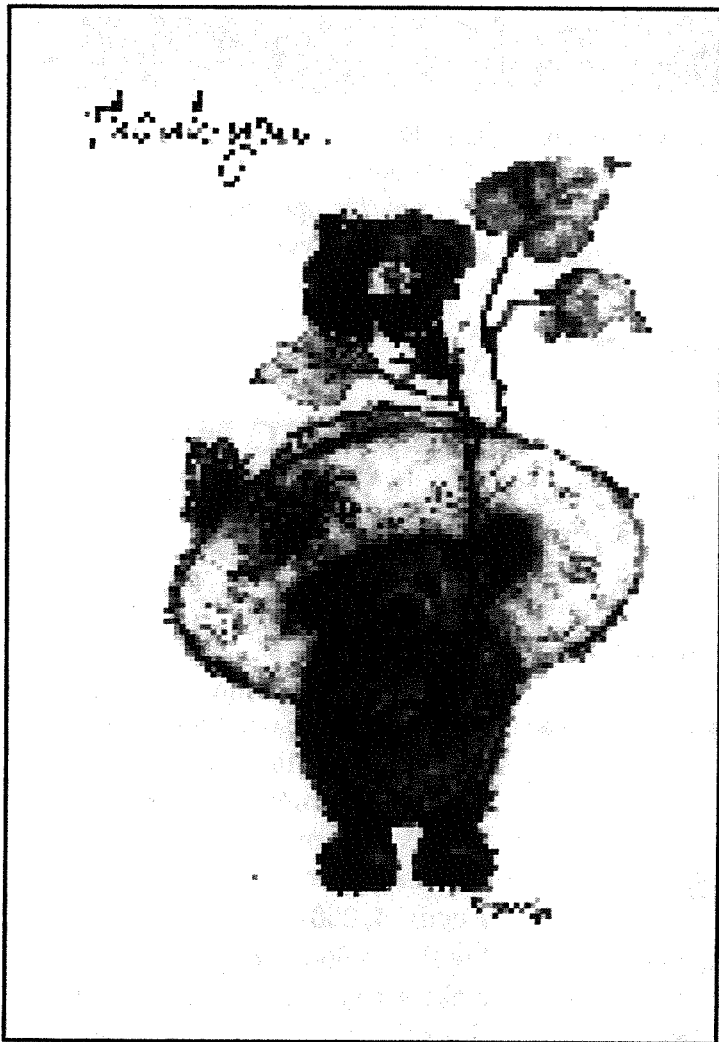
Mark your calendars for August 4, 2001 from 1 - 4 pm. I will be helping the youngsters make yarn dolls, AND I will also show all you volunteers how to make the dolls as well.

Please come out August 4th for the training session. It won't take long, and you will get continuing education credit. I hope to see you on that date.

Let's make yarn dolls!!

—Jane Bingel





EcoCamp Scholarship Awarded: Education is the first step toward conservation, and Armand Bayou can become an important part of the total educational experience of a child. EcoCamp offers children the opportunity to delve into science topics in more depth than would be afforded otherwise. It is truly wonderful that the Volunteer Corps supports education in many ways including the funding of two EcoCamp scholarships. Volunteers are having a positive impact. Thank you for your continued support! —Linda Sumner

ABNC AFTER KIM

As most of you know, Kim is leaving Armand Bayou Nature Center this month. We can't thank her enough for all of her hard work, creative ideas and good spirit. Kim's desire to be in a classroom is strong, and we wish her the best of luck.

But now what? Future plans include hiring a full-time Education Coordinator/Animal Collections Manager and a part-time Volunteer

Coordinator whose primary responsibility will be the Volunteer Corps. This will also mean that Chris Battan will go to a part-time status as planned.

We are excited to have a staff member whose job is focused on the volunteers. But we will miss Kim and wish her well in the future.

—Linda Sumner



ARMAND BAYOU NATURE CENTER ECOSYSTEMS

Each month The Bayou Foliage will highlight information from the ABNC Volunteer Manual.

Armand Bayou Nature Center's 2,500-acre property contains portions of three once prominent Gulf Coast ecosystems. A tall grass prairie, a riparian forest, and a bayou comprise distinct natural units where living things and their non-living environment are linked together by energy and nutrient flows.

The bayou developed in response to the gradual slope of the land to the Gulf of Mexico. Fed by rainwater it begins as a small freshwater stream and flows into Clear Lake and then into Galveston Bay where it mixes further with the salt water of the gulf. This brackish water allows the occurrence of species adapted to varying salinities depending on rainfall or tidal flow.

The coarse texture of the soil deposited in the bayou's floodplain results in drainage patterns that are conducive to tree growth. The ecosystem that results may be referred to as riparian forest where periodic flooding allows nutrient exchange between the forest and bayou. The trees themselves change the nature of the ecosystem by creating a buffer and habitat for understory species. A thick canopy of branches and leaves slows moisture evaporation, provides shade, and modifies temperatures.

The dense clay-like soil of the prairie discourages tree growth and is conducive to grass species. Often referred to as "gumbo", this soil creates large cracks as it shrinks during dry periods and drains poorly as it swells during times of increased rainfall. Browsing and grazing animals and fires also helped eliminate food species and served to the benefit of grasses whose fibrous roots, budding cells, and stored food reserves, remained intact underground and allowed quick rejuvenation.

The occurrence of these three ecosystems at ABNC provides the opportunity for visitors to experience great biological diversity within a relatively small geographic area. The boundaries between the forest, prairie, and bayou are referred to as ecotones. Because ecotones allow organisms to utilize the resources of more than one ecosystem, they tend to harbor abundant arrays of life.

The proximity of natural systems is valuable not only to wildlife, but to humans as well. Native Americans could utilize all three ecosystems for a variety of resources. Prairie grasses were woven into baskets and nets, nuts were gathered from forest trees, and fish and clams were harvested from the bayou. Early European settlers were also drawn to the three ecosystems. A forest for timber, a prairie for grazing cattle and crop production, and a bayou for transportation made this an appealing place to live. Today the area's human inhabitants are farther removed from the functions of its ecosystems. Ties to the environment, its cycles, and its natural resources have faded.

ABNC's 2500 acres now contain a remnant of our rapidly disappearing natural heritage. Through education and stewardship programs the center strives to preserve this area and the biological diversity and ecological relationships it contains. By providing the opportunity for visitors to experience these ecosystems, it is hoped that ties to the land will be rekindled and individuals will be motivated to protect this and other natural areas for the enjoyment and enrichment of all.

AUGUST 2001 CALENDAR

| | | | | |
|---|---------|------------------------------------|-----------|----------------------------|
| Aug 2 | Thurs | Volunteer Board Meeting | 6pm | Ed Adams |
| Aug 4 | Sat | Learn to Make a Yarn Doll Training | 1-4pm | Jane Bingel |
| Aug 4 | Sat | Garden Days-Farmhouse | 8:30am | Mary Alice Trumble |
| Aug 7 | Tue | Deadline for Bayou Foliage | 4pm | Molly Ganter |
| Aug 9 | Thurs | Volunteer Meeting | 6:30 pm | Ed Adams |
| <i>Vol Meeting Presentation: Galapagos Islands Helen Hodges</i> | | | | |
| Aug 15 | Wed | Volunteer Orientation | 6:30-9 pm | Volunteer Coordina- tor |
| Aug 18 | Sat | Garden Days-Farmhouse | 8:30am | Mary Alice Trumble |
| August 18 – September 22 | | Volunteer Training | | Volunteer Coordina- tor |
| Sept 1 | Sat | Garden Days-Farmhouse | 9:00am | Mary Alice Trumble |
| Sept 6 | Thurs | Volunteer Board Meeting | 6pm | Ed Adams |
| | | Connections Committee: | 7pm | Helen Hodges-Chair |
| Sept 11 | Tue | Deadline for Bayou Foliage | 4pm | Molly Ganter |
| Sept 13 | Thurs | All Volunteer Meeting | 6:30pm | Ed Adams |
| Sept 15 | Sat | Garden Days-Farmhouse | 9:00am | Mary Alice Trumble |
| Oct 4 | Thurs | Volunteer Board Meeting | 6pm | Ed Adams |
| Oct 6 | Sat | Garden Days-Farmhouse | 9:00am | Mary Alice Trumble |
| Oct 9 | Tue | Deadline for Bayou Foliage | 4pm | Molly Ganter |
| Oct 11 | Thurs | All Volunteer Meeting | 6:30pm | Ed Adams |
| Oct 20 | Sat | Breakfast with the Birds | 7-10am | Pat Doerr-Leader |
| | | | | Jane Bingel-Reservations |
| Oct 20 | Sat | Garden Days-Farmhouse | 9:00am | Mary Alice Trumble |
| Oct 26-27 | Fri-Sat | Creepy Crawlers | | |
| Nov 3 | Sat | Garden Days-Farmhouse | 9:00am | Mary Alice Trumble |
| Nov 10-11 | Sat-Sun | Fall Festival | | |
| Nov 17 | Sat | Garden Days-Farmhouse | 9:00am | Mary Alice Trumble |

NOTES: Education Classes - If you plan to buddy or observe a program it would be a good idea to let the coordinator know so he/she can call you in case of a cancellation. Please keep in mind that instructors arrive at least 30 minutes before the program to set-up and stay after to clean up. Set-up and clean up are part of the program. See EcoAdventures Brochure for a program description. Remember to wear your nametag and your khaki uniform shirt when doing your volunteer duties. Depending on your activities at the Center, it is a good idea to bring mosquito repellent and sunscreen.

STEWARDSHIP SATURDAYS: Meet in the ABNC parking lot at the project's designated time (Green House if it is raining). Dress appropriately for the activity. Sign up for an activity when you arrive. There may be a limit of volunteers for certain projects. If you have never volunteered at ABNC, you must fill out appropriate forms. If you are between the ages of 14 and 17 you must be accompanied at all times by an adult. You are welcome to bring a drink and a snack. Log your hours before you leave.

GARDEN DAYS: Garden Days are held at the Farmhouse each month on the 1st and 3rd Saturdays at 9:00 am (unless otherwise stated).

DUTY ROSTER FOR AUGUST 2001

VOLUNTEER DUTY SCHEDULE - AUGUST 2001

In an attempt to take some of the load off 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 and 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 8/4 | | Danny Yancey | Charles Buren | Joan Henderson | Paula Thorsen | Jane Bingle Yam Dolls |
| Sun 8/5 | No Trails on Sunday at 11:00 | | Stan Kraubs | Martha Hood | Eleanor Stanley | Marilyn Clark Hummingbirds Mary Ann Tucker Bas ketweaving |
| Sat 8/11 | Jim Crabb | Joe Bryan | Retty Snyder | Stephania Rogers | Tom Scarcella | Blacksmithing Hilary Gibbs Study Skins |
| Sun 8/12 | No Trails on Sunday at 11:00 | | Kathy Ching | Ken Russell | Polly Swardlin | Martha Hood Ropemaking |
| Sat 8/18 | Louise Peck | John Siptak | Danny Yancy | Paula Thorson | | Cathy Jett Snakes |
| Sun 8/19 | No Trails on Sunday at 11:00 | | Stan Kraubs | Joyce Roberts | Dottie Evans | Patsy Cashion Lizards |
| Sat 8/25 | Kelli Glenn | Ray Parker | Pat Bates | Susan Williams | Susan Hesley Corn Husk Dolls | Eleanor Stanley Reptiles |
| Sun 8/26 | No Trails on Sunday at 11:00 | | Martha Hood | Kelli Glenn | Jane Bingle | Julie Brandt Ropemaking Polly Swardlin Bird Adap tations |

If you can fill in any of the blank spots, please call the appropriate coordinator. Thanks!

2001 VOLUNTEER BOARD

| | | | | | | |
|-------------|----------------|--------------|------------------|-----------------|--------------|----------------------------|
| Ed Adams | Chair | 713-946-2754 | Chris Hiscox | Admissions | 281-286-1609 | Bayou Foliage |
| Stan Kraubs | Vice Chair | 281-470-2744 | Eldine Owens | Weekend Demos | 281-486-7524 | Molly Ganter - Publisher |
| Irene Ward | Secretary | 281-992-3912 | Ruby Dilgren | Weekend Trail | 281-488-1727 | Irene Ward - Co-Editor |
| Ken Russell | Treasurer | 281-488-0390 | Stephania Rogers | Weekday Farm | 713-473-4324 | Mary Yirkovich - Co-Editor |
| Jim Callan | Stewardship | 281-824-9411 | Laura Bradley | Wkdy Outdoor Ed | 281-992-2604 | Rita Barnes - Reporter |
| Jane Bingle | Interpretation | 281-554-5069 | Dottie Evans | Outreach | 281-532-1273 | Wanda Hayden - Circulation |

E-mail your articles to Molly.Ganter at GANTCLAN@AOL.COM or call 281-484-5021 or fax to 281-481-2337

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Organization
U.S. Postage
PAID
Seabrook, Texas
Permit No. 632

A Publication of Armand Bayou
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