

Bayou Foliage

February 2001

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

Vol. 20 No. 2

LOOKING AHEAD

FEBRUARY CALENDAR

- Feb. 1
Volunteer Board Meeting, 6 p.m.
- Feb. 6
Deadline for Bayou Foliage
- Feb. 8
Volunteer Meeting, 6:30 p.m.
- Feb. 15
ABNC Trustees Meeting, 5-6 p.m.
- Feb. 17
ABNC Creature Feature, 9-5

VOLUNTEER OF THE MONTH

Christine Hiscox

Christine Hiscox was born and raised in Canada. She was a registered nurse there.

—See p. 2

VOLUNTEER MEETING

Date: February 8, 2001
 Time: 6:30 p.m. - Refreshments
 7:00 p.m. - Program -
How Are We Doing at ABNC?
 8:00 p.m. - Business Meeting

The pace of change has definitely quickened at old ABNC this past year. Where is ABNC headed? Are we on track? How will we know we have arrived? Our program for February will be a presentation by Ephriam Dickson, Executive Director of ABNC. Ample time will be allowed for everyone to ask questions.

VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR

ABNC's Volunteer of the Year for 2000 is *Stephania Rogers*. Stephania put in over 250 hours of service last year. She has been a loyal volunteer for 9 years. Stephania and her husband Paul Rogers became volunteers in 1992. They had both volunteered as Sunday school teachers and Girl Scout and Boy Scout leaders. With a background like that they quickly found their place at the Nature Center. It is obvious when you see Stephania with kids how much she enjoys teaching them.

Stephania always has a positive attitude, takes the initiative to get things done, is a dedicated hard worker, and is always pleasant to be around. These are the qualities that make a Volunteer of the year.

She has been a big part of the success of ABNC's education department. Not only did Stephania take on the job of Weekday Farm Class Coordinator in 2000, but she decided to take on the responsibility again during 2001. ABNC was absolutely thrilled to hear Stephania would be doing that job again. It is a tough job and she is great at it. Stephania is also an entrepreneur. Having been a homemaker all her life she used her baking and coordinating skills and started selling homemade cookies at special events to make money for the volunteer fund. It has been very profitable and she has gotten lots of willing participants to help her make cookies. How could you resist Stephania's sweet smile.

Stephania always has a positive attitude, takes the initiative to get things done, is a dedicated hard worker, and is always pleasant to be around. These are the qualities that make a Volunteer of the year. Thank you Stephania, for all your hard work, dedication and sweet demeanor. ABNC wouldn't be the same without you.

—Kim Wasserman



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 **Christine Hiscox**. Christine was born and raised in Canada. She was a registered nurse there. At the end of 1999 Christine and her husband came from Canada to the Clear Lake area for her husband's job. They looked through a guidebook and ended up at ABNC. Christine really enjoyed the place and was thrilled when she realized she could become a volunteer. She completed training in February, 2000.

Christine quickly became involved in teaching weekday classes. She says her favorite thing about volunteering at ABNC is the kids.

Christine quickly became involved in teaching weekday classes. She says her favorite thing about volunteering at ABNC is the kids. You can definitely tell when you see her with kids. She has also been a tremendous help at the front desk. I know Jo agrees with that. Christine will be on the volunteer board as the admissions coordinator this year. She'll do a great job. Thanks Christine for all your time and hard work, you are a valuable volunteer.

—Kim Wasserman

MINUTES

MINUTES OF THE VOLUNTEER MEETING, JANUARY 12, 2000

Being that Irene Ward, Secretary, was absent Ed Adams asked Martha Hood to take the minutes.

Meeting was called to order by Ed Adams, Chairman of the Volunteer Board.

Prior to the business portion of the monthly meeting, the Volunteer Appreciation Dinner was held.

The minutes from the December meeting as published in the Bayou Foliage, were approved.

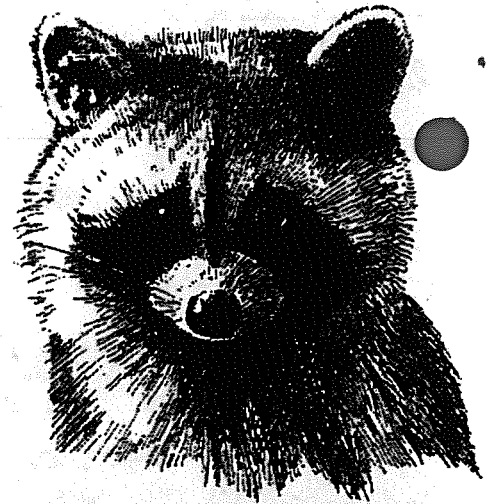
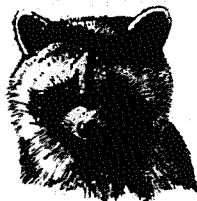
Ed Adams introduced the new volunteer board for 2001. Next, Ed introduced Dan Pelletier as his re-

placement for the weekend canoe trips. Ed also announced that Joan Henderson had resigned as publisher of the Bayou Foliage, and asked that anyone interested in filling the position please contact him.

Becky Brignac and Polly Swerdlin, announced that they are recruiting volunteers for the event Down on the Farm, and to please sign up.

Respectfully submitted,

—Martha Hood



E V E N T S

WHAT'S THERE TO SEE ON A NIGHT HIKE?

Bats flying! Owls hooting! Vultures roosting! Sparkling blue eyes of wolf spiders covering the forest floor! Deer browsing! Large orange eyes of an alligator on the surface of the bayou! Maybe an opossum, raccoon, or armadillo. And, on a clear night, the stars. Most of the fauna at ABNC is nocturnal, so the time to hike is at night.

Lou Wheatcraft led a group of hikers on a cool December evening by the light of a nearly full moon. I was buddying with Lou and brought up the rear. (For safety and convenience, two volunteers are required for night hikes.) Our owl-calling tape brought three barred owls within easy sight of our flashlights. Lou taught us a trick of pointing a small flashlight, as if it was growing out of one's forehead, at the ground where one will see the sparkling blue "diamond" eyes of wolf spiders everywhere.

The night was too cold for most animals to be out, but we did disturb a large number of vultures roosting by the bayou and spotted a few deer on the prairie. We were sure everyone would be talking about his or her new experiences tomorrow.

—Stan Krauhs

DOWN ON THE FARM

Date: March 24
Time: 9:00 - 5:00
713-947-0216

Well, time is rollin', and so is DOWN ON THE FARM. It will be an all day affair this time, from 9:00 a.m. till 5:00 p.m. The committee is working fast and furious. You will begin hearing from different committee members for different needs. Polly will be lining you up for the demos. Lew Hornig may be contacting you for your ideas on some things.

Wells Fargo stagecoach: We have the Wells Fargo stagecoach lined up. People will be able to have their pictures taken in/on the coach. The coach will be horseless, but a representative will be there to talk about the coach and how and where it was built (west Texas).

Attire: If at all possible, please dress as they did in 1900. This is a big draw for the public, and it helps with the ambiance. Southern Importers (713-524-8236) here in Houston has the proper costumes. I learned this from a new volunteer (sorry, can't remember her name) who worked the Fall Festival. Her attire was perfect.

Baby animal petting: The baby animal petting in the barn will have crowd control this time. One side of the barn will be roped off for the entrance and the other side for the exit. The exit area will have hand-washing stations for anyone to use. We need to encourage the folks leaving the petting area to use these facilities.

Cows, horses, & goats: The Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo folks will be here again. Also the farrier we had the first year has agreed to return. Mr. Gill will not only be bringing his fabulous baby goats and friendly turkey but will be demonstrating cow milking with his two new Jersey cows with their calves by their sides!!

There is still a lot to do. If you would like to be part of the committee, you are welcome at any time. We will have flyers to distribute, signs to make, and set up on the grounds, ant annihilation, grounds preparation, etc.

Will have more for you in the March issue.

—Becky Brignac

OTHER BUSINESS

FROM THE VOLUNTEER OFFICE

Supplies Still Needed

The Education Department is looking for more supplies. We need complete box turtle shells, cicada molts and clear tennis ball holders. If you see these items please collect them and bring them to the volun-

teer office. We use these items in our programs and they are not available for purchase.

The Words To The A-B-N-C Song (YMCA Tune)

VERSE

Hey Y'all, You know you should be proud.
I said, hey y'all, shout it out loud
I said, hey y'all, stand out from the crowd
There's - a - need - to - be - noticed.

CHORUS

It's fun to be at the A B N C.
It's fun to be at the A B N C.

VERSE

We have everything for you to enjoy.
You can teach all the girls and boys.

CHORUS

It's fun to be at the A B N C.
It's fun to be at the A B N C.



WHAT'S IN THE BOX?

Have you noticed the large wooden boxes placed on the trails? These boxes contain teacher's supplies such as feathers, bones, skulls, etc. A school pays an additional fee for access to the boxes, which enables the teacher to create an outdoor classroom.

TREASURER'S REPORT

January 2001

Prepared by Judy Sharp 1/03/01

Beginning Balance:

\$2,288.47

Expenditures:

| | |
|--|----------------|
| Postage - Bayou Foliage (Jan. 2001) | \$33.80 |
| 2 hams for Christmas party | 34.49 |
| Bank service charge | 2.00 |
| Total Expenditures | \$70.29 |

Income

| | |
|-------------------------|-----------------|
| Cookie sales (Yuletide) | \$149.05 |
| Recycling bin proceeds | 63.29 |
| Stove donations | 6.00 |
| Total Income | \$218.34 |

CURRENT BALANCE **\$2,436.52**

VOLUNTEER BUDGET

It's time for the Volunteer Board to assemble a proposed budget 2001. In doing so we would like to solicit input from the volunteer organization with particular emphasis on items that would help the volunteers (and the Nature Center) accomplish its work/activities. Don't worry about whether we can afford it. Having a list of sound, constructive ideas is the intent. We need to avoid another farmhouse-stove situation where we knew we had a problem, but didn't start talking about it until the twelfth hour. You can give your inputs or thoughts in writing to Ed Adams or Ken Russell. The simplest way would be to leave them in the Chairman's or Treasurer's mail box in the Volunteer Office (where Kim sits). We need them by the end of February.

—Ken Russell



BAYOU BANTER

THANK YOU OUTREACH VOLUNTEERS

I want to thank each and every one of you who participated in last year's outreach program. We interacted with about 5,000 people. That's a lot of people! This feat was made possible because all of you gave so much of your time and talents by doing Hands on History programs and reptile demonstrations, and by going to many functions to distribute information about the various ABNC programs and activities. Because of you many people wanted to learn more about the Center and wanted to become ABNC members and volunteers. Again, I can't thank all of you enough. I'm sure you'll give Dottie Evans as much support as you gave me.

—Jane Bingel

P.S. All of you volunteers come out and buddy with us so that you, too, can have the satisfaction of doing something worthwhile and still have fun.

GOODBYE TO FRIENDS

Three staff members are leaving this month, and we will miss them. Jonathan Perez, a longtime volunteer and then staff member, has resigned from the Nature Center. He will devote the coming year to completing his degree. He was and is a good friend and was always willing to lend a helping hand. We will miss him and his unique sense of humor. Good luck, Jonathan!

Christine Barrett, bookkeeper,

leaves this month, to have a little more time with her young children. She was our "cash box" lady for all the special events. Enjoy your family, Christine!

Jennifer Rigdon, Marketing, is also departing. She worked on the membership quarterly newsletter and did the public releases for events. She is a real fan of the volunteers. We wish you the best, Jennifer!

PUBLISHER/EDITOR-IN-CHIEF FOR BAYOU FOLIAGE

Please call:

Kim (281) 474-2551 or

Ed Adams (713) 946-2754

The Volunteer organization is looking for a publisher/team member for the Bayou Foliage. You will need to gather information from the volunteers and the staff, put it on a computer and e-mail the information to our editor once a month. Staff members, volunteer board members, and the Bayou Foliage reporter already write most articles. This job is a "coordinating-gathering material" type position. You will need to attend the Volunteer Board meetings the first Thursday of each month. Also it would be helpful for you to attend the regular Volunteer meetings (second Thursday of each month) if possible.

CONGRATULATIONS

Mary Alice Trumble recently received the third place award for the Junior Master Gardener Curriculum Writing Contest. JMG is the youth gardening program of the Texas Agricultural Extension Service. The

writing contest was for teachers and youth leaders across the country. She received a cash award and her work will be published in the upcoming JMG handbook and leader's guide for grades 6-8. All entries were based on age appropriateness for a 6th-8th grade audience, novelty, use of common household items, effectiveness of lesson and classroom extensions in one or more subjects (Language Arts, math, Science, Social Studies). Mary Alice has also worked as part of a writing team from Texas A&M to produce other materials for the JMG handbook.



REFRESHMENTS SIGN-UP

Our refreshment time at the Volunteer Meeting is the MOST IMPORTANT part to some of us. I certainly enjoy that time. Not only is it nice to have some finger foods but I get to see old friends and meet some new ones. Let us all take a turn furnishing some of those goodies and drinks. This responsibility should not be assumed only by the Volunteer Board. Won't you sign up for one meeting? There will be a sign-up sheet at the February meeting. We need two or three people to bring sodas, cups, napkins, cookies, or cracker/dips, etc., for approximately 40 people. Keep it SIMPLE. Will you please do your share? Thanks.

—Joan Henderson

WHY VOLUNTEER?

We want to collect a few of your ideas and thoughts on the joys of volunteering. Please drop us a line sharing "why you volunteer." E-mail Joan at hendrsn@texas.net or put your comments in the Volunteer Office newsletter box. Here are a few items Becky Brignac has collected. Some are her thoughts and some she has collected from other sources. (Not all sources are known.)

"Every private citizen has a public responsibility." *Myra Janco Daniels*

"Knowing that we make a difference gives us purpose in life, results are contentedness and then happiness."

People need people "...sometimes people need people anyway, even if they do know how to do things by themselves."

"Knowing that we make a difference gives us purpose in life, results are contentedness and then happiness."

"Investigators found that activities involving regular volunteer work were among the most powerful predictors of reduced mortality rates. Those who volunteered to help others at least once a week were two and a half times less likely to die during the study as those who never volunteered. In other words, those who helped others lived longer themselves." *Dean Ornish, MD*



BISON HIT THE BAYOU

There is a new attraction at ABNC. Two bison steers now graze lazily behind a fence. The bison are the first acquisition of the Discovery Loop, which is described as the short "trail" within the core area of the nature center that will eventually include ten live animal exhibits. During January drawings will be developed for the entire Discovery Loop. Soon a viewing platform and interpretive signage will be set up at the nature center and viewers will be able to learn everything they want to know about bison. Volunteers are also building a shelter for the animals.

The bison are four years old, and at this age they are considered "teenagers," according to Ephriam Dickson, ABNC Executive Director.

The bison are four years old, and at this age they are considered "teenagers," according to Ephriam Dickson, ABNC Executive Director. Onlookers won't want to add to the animals' identity crisis by calling them buffalo, although they are sometimes known as American buffalo. Their scientific name is *Bison bison*. In actuality, water buffalo are the only real buffalo.

The bison were donated by Cap Rocks Canyon State Park in the

Texas panhandle where bison are being bred. They were part of the Goodnight herd and were donated because they cannot breed. The Goodnight herd originated around the 1890s when Mr. Goodnight, by establishing his herd, saved bison from extinction in Texas. No one knows why the bison disappeared from the Houston area. But there is a theory that their disappearance was brought about by a change in environment. It is believed that they were gone before the first settlers arrived. We do know that the Native Americans in the Gulf Coast area, as in other parts of the country, used the bison they killed to supply many of their daily needs.

Ephriam Dickson says that the bison generally ignore people. "The staff," he points out, "feeds them a cattle supplement that is like a desert to them." Since the staff delivers the food via tractor, the bison know the approaching tractor means food and move toward it. The bison are grazing animals, and they have had a more sparse diet in the panhandle. "Here there is a much richer and more varied diet," Mr. Dickson said. "It is like a smorgasbord for the animals."

Mr. Dickson indicated that the grazing of the bison stimulates the ecosystem. "If the prairie plant community is not disturbed for several decades, the species of the plants would begin to change. Eventually bushes and trees will out-compete the grasses for food and water, and many of the native prairie plants will disappear." He went on to say that when there are periodic disturbances on the prairie (such as fire

and grazing), the ecosystem stays in balance. After being grazed there will be new growth as the plants quickly respond. Many bushes and trees, however, cannot respond so quickly, and it may take years for them to grow back. Therefore, grasses are at their optimum in an environment that has some disturbance to keep out bushes and trees.

We do know that the Native Americans in the Gulf Coast area, as in other parts of the country, used the bison they killed to supply many of their daily needs.

"Further," Mr. Dickson explained, "bison have historically introduced some level of disturbance into a prairie ecosystem. They grazed, clipping off the tops of plants. They trampled bushes, rubbed down small trees, and kicked back some plants that were trying to out-compete the grasses. At times they created wallows—shallow depressions in which they rolled. The wallows often hold water for part of the year, promoting other plants growing in the prairie that require more water and providing habitat for amphibians."

Now that the bison are back in the bay area, stirring the ecosystem and providing diversion for the public, the nature center might truthfully say, "We're in the chips!"

—Rita Barnes

DUTY ROSTER FOR FEBRUARY 2001

VOLUNTEER DUTY SCHEDULE - FEBRUARY 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 | NATURAL HISTORY DEMO |
|----------|-------------------|-------------------|-----------------|------------------|----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Sat 2/3 | Jim Crabb | Dekka Hassey | Joan Henderson | Cathy Jett | Tom Scarsella | Ruby Dilgren |
| Sun 2/4 | | Martha Hood | Ken Russell | Stephania Rogers | Woodworking Zel Arbuckle | Polly Swerdlin Turtles |
| Sat 2/10 | Mike/Eldine Owens | Betty Snider | Paul Brunkow | Pat Cashion | Stephania Rogers Rope | Anne Tincher Pond Life |
| Sun 2/11 | | Stan Krauhs | Merle Bunde | Polly Swerdlin | Mary Ann Tucker Basketweaving | |
| Sat 2/17 | Louise Peck | Ray Parker | Pat Cashion | Jane Bingel | Chris Bingham Stereoscope | Ruby/Scorpions M. Clark/Squirrels |
| Sun 2/18 | | Danny Yancey | Mary Ann Tucker | Eleanor Stanley | Emily Egan Weaving | |
| Sat 2/24 | Kelli Glenn | Mariamne Phillips | Pat Bates | Chris Bingham | Jane Bingel Cheese | Eldine Owens Snakes |
| Sun 2/25 | | Stan Krauhs | Martha Hood | Marjorie Borey | Tom Scarsella Blacksmith | Eleanor Stanley Lizards |

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 |
| Stan Krauhs | Vice Chair | 281-470-2744 |
| Irene Ward | Secretary | 281-992-3912 |
| Ken Russell | Treasurer | 281-488-0390 |
| Jim Callan | Stewardship | 281-488-5753 |
| Jane Bingel | Interpretation | 281-544-5069 |
| Chris Hiscox | Admissions | 281-286-1609 |
| Eldine Owens | Weekend Demos | 281-486-7524 |
| Ruby Dilgren | Weekend Trail | 281-488-1727 |
| Stephania Rogers | Weekday Farm | 713-473-4324 |
| Laura Bradley | Wkdy Outdoor Ed | 281-992-2604 |
| Dottie Evans | Outreach | 281-532-1273 |

Bayou Foliage

Joan Henderson, Publisher
 Irene Ward - Co-Editor
 Mary Yurkovich - Co-Editor
 Rita Barnes - Reporter
 Wanda Hayden - Circulation
 Email your articles to the
 Publisher - hendrsn@texas.net.

F E B R U A R Y 2 0 0 1 C A L E N D A R

| | | | | |
|---------|--------|---|------------|-----------------|
| Feb. 1 | Thurs. | Volunteer Board Meeting | 6pm | Ed Adams |
| Feb. 3 | Sat. | Vol Sat. 1: Stewardship | 8:30am | Jim Callen/Mark |
| | | Vol Sat. 2: Facilities/Grnds | 8:30am | Patrick |
| | | New Volunteer Training | 9:30am | Kim Wasserman |
| | | Hanson Garden Workday | 9am | Chris LaChance |
| | | Birthday party - reptiles | 10-12 | Kim Wasserman |
| Feb. 6 | Tues. | Info due for Mar issue of Bayou Foliage | | Joan Henderson |
| Feb. 8 | Thurs. | Volunteer Meeting | 6:30pm | Ed Adams |
| Feb. 10 | Sat. | Night Hike | 6-8pm | Ruby Dilgren |
| | | New Volunteer Training | 9:30am | Kim Wasserman |
| | | Girl Scouts - Water Wonders | 9:45am-3pm | Kim Wasserman |
| | | Vol Sat 1:Facilities/Grnds | 8:30am | Patrick |
| Feb. 15 | Thurs. | Hanson Garden Workday | 9am | Chris LaChance |
| | | ABNC Trustees Mtg. | 5-6pm | Ephriam Dickson |
| Feb. 17 | Sat. | Creature Feature | 9-5 | Linda Sumner |
| | | New Volunteer Training | 9:30am | Kim Wasserman |
| | | Birthday Party - Reptiles | 1-3pm | Kim Wasserman |
| | | Vol Sat 1: Stewardship | 8:30am | Mark/Jim |
| | | Vol Sat 2: Facilities/Grnds | 8:30am | Patrick |
| Feb. 18 | Sun. | Birthday Party - Reptiles | 2-4pm | Kim Wasserman |
| Feb. 24 | Sat. | Girl Scouts-Water Wonders | 9:45am-3pm | Linda Sumner |
| | | New Volunteer Training | 9:30am | Kim Wasserman |
| | | Vol Sat 1: Facilities/Grnds | 8:30am | Patrick |
| Feb. 27 | Tues. | School - Reptiles /3-8 gr. | 10:30-12 | Laura Bradley |

Note: 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.

Note: Volunteer/Stewardship Saturday - 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.



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