

Bayou Foliage

January 2001

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

Vol. 20 No. 1

LOOKING AHEAD

January Calendar

Jan. 4

- Volunteer Board Meeting, 6 p.m.

Jan. 6

- Volunteer Burn Training, 10 a.m.-2 p.m. (Register)

Jan. 12

- 6:30 p.m.-Volunteer Appreciation Dinner, 6 - 9 p.m., RSVP to front desk.

Jan. 14

- Down on the Farm Meeting, 4 p.m. (Open to all)

Jan. 20

- Annual ABNC Members Meeting 10 - 11:30 a.m.

ABNC Volunteers

"Each person's participation makes it happen."

(See page 4)



Volunteer Meeting

January Meeting Will Feature Volunteer Appreciation Dinner

Volunteers, it is time for us to relax! The January meeting will be a Volunteer Appreciation Dinner, to be held on Friday, January 12, 2001, from 6 to 9 p.m. RSVP to the Nature Center at 281-474-2551.

The staff will prepare us a good meal and will provide the program for the January meeting. Please note that it is on Friday rather than Thursday night. Come and enjoy!

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 Dottie Evans. Dottie came to Texas from Kansas City in October 1996. Lucky

the weekday education classes and helps out at the front desk. You will also always see her donating her time at ABNC's special events. Congratulations to Dottie for being elected to the 2001 Volunteer Board as the Outreach Coordinator.

Dottie was a docent at the Kansas City Zoo for 20 years and a Houston Zoo docent, so becoming a volunteer teacher at ABNC was right up her alley.

for us Dottie moved close by and with her experience and love for nature she took volunteer training in the Spring of 1997. She was a docent at the Kansas City Zoo for 20 years and a Houston Zoo Docent, so becoming a volunteer teacher at ABNC was right up her alley. Dottie is very active with

She will be a great asset to the board. Dottie says she doesn't volunteer for the recognition, she does it because it's fun and she enjoys working with the kids. Thank you, Dottie for all your hard work and dedication.

—Kim Wasserman

MINUTES

Minutes of the December 14, 2000, Volunteer Meeting

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

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

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

Judy Sharp, Treasurer, presented the Treasurer's Report. Income from cookie and cookbook sales during Fall Festival totaled \$366.25. Another \$52.40 was collected for the farmhouse stove. The current balance for December is \$2,288.47. Stephania Rogers reported that Yuletide cookie sales totaled \$147.00.

Stan Krauhs, Vice-Chair, reported that a continuing education class on "Mushroom Hunting, Identification and Tasting" would be this upcoming Saturday.

Jane Bingel, Ways and Means Committee Chairperson, reported that Saturday January 13th is the "Breakfast with the Birds" volunteer fundraiser. A full course breakfast will be served at the farmhouse. The cost will be \$20 and will be led by birder Paula Kennedy. The sign-up sheet will be in the volunteer office or you can call Jane.

Kim Wasserman announced that Dottie Evans was volunteer of the month. To learn more, see the "Volunteer of the Month" section of *Bayou Foliage*.

Kim also reminded those in attendance that the Volunteer

Appreciation Dinner will be Friday, January 12th. Also, the volunteer logbook will need to be finalized, so don't forget to record your volunteer hours. Last of all, there were 433 individuals who came to this year's Yuletide gathering.

Next, Barbara Hill, chairperson of the nominating committee, read the list of candidates for the 2001 volunteer board. The new board was elected by acclamation.

Jim Edwards announced that a cookbook titled "Spade to Spoon" published by the Galveston County Master Gardener's Association, is being sold in the gift shop for \$15.99.

The meeting was adjourned.
Respectfully submitted,

—Martha Hood
Secretary

E V E N T S

DOWN ON THE FARM MEETING

The planning meeting is January 14, 2001, at 4 p.m. Now is the time to bring your ideas, suggestions, and enthusiasm. Down on the Farm is scheduled for Saturday, March 24 from 9 a.m. till 5 p.m. We are going to have fun. We already have a good core group of coordinators but we need you.

Please join us in January to help us ensure that we give the public the best ever DOWN ON THE FARM. Questions? Call Becky Brignac at 713-947-0216.

PRESCRIBED BURN CLASS

Staffer Mark Kramer will be offering a volunteer burn training class for those of you that haven't attended previous classes. The class will be focusing on the use of prescribed fire at the Nature Center. Whether you are a long time blackliner or have never attended a controlled fire before, this will be an important class to attend.

Fire Ecology

We'll be discussing fire ecology, fire behavior, laws and regulations, burning techniques,

safety, and equipment use.

We'll also light a small test plot if conditions are favorable. If you are interested in attending any further burns please plan to attend. Appropriate dress includes rubber boots, long cotton pants, long sleeve cotton shirt, cap, gloves, and bandana.

Please dress appropriately for the weather. Bring your sack lunch and drink. Please call the front desk to register. The class will be held Saturday, January 6, from 10 a.m. through 2 p.m. **Attending this class will be required to participate in any future burns.**

Fowl Play Suspected in Chickens' Demise

In October five hens and one rooster took up residence at the Martyn Farm.

The fowl were free ranging during the day and leisurely pecked their way around the Martyn Farm. They were too young as yet to provide eggs and had only to be fed and locked in cages at night for their own safety. All went well in their new home until one night when, inadvertently, they were not caged. The next morning, it was obvious that the chickens had been a feast for some predator.

Patrick Hayes, Facilities Manager at the nature Center, suggested that the misfortune could

have been the work of coyotes, bobcats, raccoons, and/or owls.

Fortunately, the staff didn't give up after the first disaster with the chickens. Soon five roosters were donated to ABNC. These were allowed the freedom of the farm during the day, but a problem surfaced when they preferred roosting in a tree to being locked up at night. Since there was no way to get them down, they spent the night in a tree. It didn't take long for an owl to strike one of the roosters, and now there are four. After this event the remaining roosters now placidly allow themselves to be caged at night.

The plan is to acquire a few hens in March. Eventually the

hens will lay eggs that can be used to feed some of the other critters at the Nature Center.

"It is a really a comfortable feeling to hear the roosters crowing," said Patrick. "You can hear them call from daylight until around 10 every morning, and it's a pleasant sound on a farm." Patrick said that many visitors enjoy seeing the fowl since there are children who have never seen chickens outside of a grocery store.

The roosters now at ABNC seem to be acclimated to their home. Unfortunately, they declined to be interviewed.

—Rita Barnes

Our Volunteers Know How To Please

We have received the following comments regarding some of our volunteers.

Dec. 9, 2000

I wanted to inform you of the wonderful birthday party Miss Ruby [Dilgren] gave for my son John. She was very fun and ex-

tremely informative. She had all of us laughing and I don't think it would have been as much fun without her. Thanks to her and the ABNC Center for a great party.

—Peri Makres

Nov. 17, 2000

Please accept this contribution

[\$100] in honor of Ed Adams, my friend and your hardy volunteer. He gave a tour to me and my Dad when I visited recently. If I lived nearby I'd be a volunteer too!

—Pamela Maupin,
Parkton, Md

Holiday Cheer Along the Bayou

Imagine eleven canoes (one a banana yellow color) decorated with big red bows on the sterns, shiny garlands, Christmas trees, decorated deer antlers, and some canoers with red Santa hats.

You could have seen just such a sight Saturday morning, December 9th. Ed Adams and 10 other volunteers had a great time at the

Christmas Breakfast Canoeing on Armand Bayou. This year 16 people signed up to enjoy a BIG breakfast of hot drinks, homemade banana nut bread, pastries, and fruit followed by an easy glide into Horsepen Bayou. Mother Nature cooperated with mild temps.

People were on the banks to watch the water parade. A photog-

rapher for the Houston Chronicle was taking pictures, and reporters from KUHT were interviewing volunteers and visitors. Very festive, very fun!

Hopefully this will be an annual event for the public (4 years thus far), and we volunteers get to "go along for the ride."

—Joan Henderson

THANK YOU

Our major event season at the Nature Center is one of the busiest times of the year for Armand Bayou Nature Center volunteers as well as the staff. Because several of the activities happen so close to each other that much more volunteer commitment is needed.

I would like to give all who participated in Creepy Crawlers and Fall Festival a giant thank you for making these events possible, providing the Nature Center all the great public exposure they give and the income they generate.

Creepy Crawlers

Creepy Crawlers 2000 attracted almost 1000 total visitors. Thanks to all who lead trail tours, did children's crafts, face painting, hay rides, served cookies and witches brew and all the other activities at this event!!! Thank you very much!!!

102 Volunteers

Fall Festival is the largest event at ABNC each year, requiring a great deal of volunteer help. This year was no exception, and all of you on the Volunteer Staff really came through!! Over 102 volunteers participated in Fall Festival 2000.

It would be impossible to produce this activity without the help of ABNC Volunteers. Each person's participation makes it happen.

Special thanks to those on the Fall Festival planning committee: Merle Bunde, Jim Callan, Jim Edwards, Roland Borey and Jim

Hawkins. I would especially like to thank Polly Swerdlin who was also on the planning committee, for the huge amount of time she gave to sign up and organize other volunteers to help with the festival. We could not have done it without you Polly!

Special Thanks

And I would like to give Mary Alice Trumble an especially big thank you for co-chairing the festival and bringing all her years of experience and expertise with this event to the planning committee table. (She got in all her volunteer hours for the year plus many, many more, during the weeks just before the festival!).

Lots and lots of thanks for your help, Mary Alice!

Thanks to each and every ABNC volunteer who helped with the Fall Festival and Creepy Crawlers!!!!

Yuletide Help

Yuletide Gathering this year also owes success to ABNC Volunteer participation and help. Thanks to those who helped with wassail, cookies, hay rides, kids Christmas crafts, and campfire caroling.

Also, a big thank you to Chris LaChance for organizing the decorating for Yuletide Gathering as well as for Fall Festival!!

THANK YOU ALL FOR ALL YOUR HELP!!!

—George Regmund
Staff Events Chair

And More Thanks

All 102 of you splendid volunteers worked like troupers at the Fall Festival.

The evaluations I am seeing from the various activity chairs are great. A lot was learned this year even if we didn't have the hoards of visitors we wanted. Next time will be the best one yet! Our thanks to the Work Release guys for hauling out the extra "stuff" from the milking stall at the barn. Once I got it swept out and hosed down, it looked almost presentable. A simple "oil cloth" cover for the counter made it clean enough to serve food items. Art Adair stopped by and mentioned having milked in that very stall, and he thought this was a good use for the space.

Some of my "scoopers" have made further suggestions for enhancing the space for future use. We would like to work on making it a permanent "ice cream parlor" of sorts. All we need is whoever could approve that to give us the go-ahead. It has been suggested that an Ice Cream Sunday each summer month could be a good attraction.

Saturday the weather worked against us, but on Sunday it warmed up, sales picked up quite a bit. Maybe next year we will sell hot chocolate or hot cider on the colder days.

I wish to thank Patsy Cashion, Henry Stanley, Barbara Miller, Janice Schwausch, George Shoup, and Laura Bradley. They made a good team, and it was a pleasure to work with them. In addition, our thanks go to Eleanor and Henry Stanley for donating an excellent freezer. It was the first time we had one with temperature control, I believe.

—Polly Swerdlin

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

Reminder

The Volunteer Appreciation Dinner will be on Friday, January 12, 2001. Mark it on your calendar; it will be a lot of fun! Please RSVP to the front desk at 281-474-2551.

Welcome Aboard

I would like to welcome aboard the 2001 Volunteer Board. Let's make this the best and most productive year yet!

Volunteer Training

Volunteer Orientation is Wednesday, January 24th from 6:30pm until 9pm. Volunteer training will take place February 3rd through March 3rd. Anyone interested in helping or taking the training contact Kim Wasserman.

HAPPY NEW YEAR!!!!

—Kim Wasserman,
Volunteer Coordinator

TREASURER'S REPORT

Our current bank balance is \$2,288.47

Fall Festival income for cookie and cookbook sales totaled \$366.25. Great job, Stephania Rogers!

We received an additional \$48.90 of donations for the farmhouse stove during Fall Festival,

due in part to Cris Santiago's pie sales efforts. She sold leftover pies, which had been donated for Fall Festival, for \$5 each to attendees on Sunday.

Stove donations now total \$1171.40. With the addition of the \$350 in non-awarded EcoCamp scholarships, we have a total of \$1521.40. This leaves us only \$78.60 short of our goal of the \$1600, which was paid for the stove.

—Judy Sharp

REVIEWING STEWARDSHIP

December is the final month of my 2-year tenure as the Stewardship Coordinator for volunteers. It has been a busy and fun time, and I want to thank everyone for his or her participation and support. I took the job wanting to enlarge the cadre of folks participating in stewardship activities and improve communications about planned activities. Hopefully folks feel that has happened in some measure.

During the 2 years, we have had activity on 46 weekends (excluding training sessions) with an average participation by regular volunteers of 6.3 persons (this does not include high school students, Boy Scouts, company participants, or college walk-ons). I also want to thank Jim Callan, who for the 2 years has worked behind the scene helping me call folks prior to each stewardship weekend to tell them what was planned. As you know, Jim will be succeeding me and I hope to reciprocate by supporting him in the same way.

—Ken Russell

FEEDING THE BIRDS

PetsMart in Webster has come through for us again by donating 60 lbs. of thistle (niger) seed just in time for goldfinch season! Please say "thanks" to Gary, the Specialties Manager, when you shop in his store.

Kroger's in Seabrook also continues to be very generous in donating damaged seed to us. Debbie in the Merchandise Receiving area is the one to thank in this case.

Arrival of Goldfinches

The goldfinches started arriving at the Nature Center at the end of November and immediately stated devouring thistle from a feeder placed at the front porch of the Education Building. Anne Tincher and Jane Bock have generously loaned us two additional thistle feeders so that we can try to keep up with the demand from the hungry avians.

How to Spot the Finches

Check out the feeders when you come out to volunteer and see if you can spot the finches. They are the small, dull olive/yellow (winter plumage) birds who stay on the feeder and peel one seed after another until disturbed. If you see that the thistle feeders (or any of the other bird feeders) are empty and want to help, feel free to fill them using the seed stored in the large green bin behind the demo counter.

—Judy Sharp

DUTY ROSTER FOR JANUARY 2001

In an attempt to take some of the load off the Coordinators, and to help cut down on our "no show" rate, a number of the persons who have volunteered for various assignments will be printed in *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 inform the appropriate coordinator and the ABNC desk. If you can fill in any of the blank spots, please call the appropriate coordinator. Thanks!

Jan. 6 Saturday

Trail 11 a.m. Jim Crabb
 Trail 2 p.m. Dekka Hassey
 Info. Services Kelli Glenn
 Farm Interpreter Eleanor Stanley
 Farm Demo.
 Natural Hist. Demo.: Ruby Dilgren
 Bats

Jan. 13 Saturday

Trail 11 a.m. Betty Snider
 Trail 2 p.m. Patty Pennington
 Info. Services Pat Bates
 Farm Interpreter Jane Bingel
 Farm Demo.: Susan Hesley
 Yarn Dolls
 Nat. History Demo.: Eldine Owens
 Snakes

Jan. 20 Saturday

Trail 11 a.m. Louise Peck
 Trail 2 p.m. Dekka Hassey
 Info. Services Rita Barnes
 Farm Interpreter Susan Williams
 Farm Demo.: Rope Stephanie Rogers
 Nat. History Demo.: Ann Tincher
 Pond Life

Jan. 7 Sunday

Trail 2 p.m. Stan Krauhs
 Info. Services Ken Russell
 Farm Interpreter Marjorie Borey
 Farm Demo.
 Nat. History Demo.: Zel Arbuckle
 Snakes

Jan. 14 Sunday

Trail 2 p.m. Ray Parker
 Info. Services Mary Yurkovich
 Farm Interpreter Polly Swerdlin
 Farm Demo. Mary Ann
 Basket Weaving Tucker
 Nat. History Demo.: Eleanor Stanley
 Lizards

Jan. 21 Sunday

Trail 2 p.m. Stan Krauhs
 Info. Services Paul Brunkow
 Farm Interpreter Janet Miller
 Farm Demo.
 Nat. History Demo.: Eleanor Stanley
 Reptiles

Jan. 27 Saturday

Trail 11 a.m. Mike/Eldine Owens
 Trail 2 p.m. Kelli Glenn
 Info. Services Danny Yancey
 Farm Interpreter Stephanie Rogers
 Farm Demo.: Cheese Jane Bingel
 Nat. History Demo.: Pat Doerr
 ABNC Winter Birds

Jan. 28 Sunday

Trail 2 p.m. Martha Hood
 Info. Services Joan Shack
 Farm Interpreter Sandy Parker
 Farm Demo.
 Nat. History Demo. Polly Swerdlin

2001 VOLUNTEER BOARD

Chair	Ed Adams	713-946-2754
Vice Chair	Stan Krauhs	281-470-2744
Secretary	Irene Ward	281-992-3912
Treasurer	Ken Russell	281-488-0390
Stewardship	Jim Callan	281-488-5753
Interpretation	Jane Bingel	281-544-5069
Admissions	Christine Hiscox	281-286-1609
Weekend Demos	Eldine/Mike Owens	281-486-7524
Weekend Trail	Ruby Dilgren	281-488-1727
Weekday Farm	Stephanie Rogers	713-473-4324
Weekday Outdoor Education	Laura Bradley	281-992-2604
Outreach	Dottie Evans	281-532-1273

BAYOU FOLIAGE

Publisher	Joan Henderson
Co-Editor	Irene Ward
Co-Editor	Mary Yurkovich
Reporter	Rita Barnes
Circulation	Wanda Hayden

E-mail your articles to the publisher at hendrnsn@texas.net

JANUARY 2001 CALENDAR

Jan 1	Mon.	Center closed		
Jan. 4	Thurs.	Volunteer Board Meeting	6 p.m.	Ed Adams
Jan. 6	Sat.	Vol. Sat. Project 1: Burn Training—Must register	10 a.m.-2 p.m.	Mark Kramer
		Vol. Sat. Project 2: Facilities and Grounds	8:30 a.m.	Patrick Hayes
		Hanson Garden Workday	9 a.m.	Chris LaChance
		Girl Scouts Badge Work	9:45a.m.-	Kim Wasserman
			3 p.m.	
Jan. 11	Thurs.	No Volunteer Meeting		
Jan. 12	Fri.	Volunteer Appreciation Dinner—RSVP front desk	6-9 p.m.	Kim Wasserman
Jan. 13	Sat.	Vol. Birding Breakfast—Reservations required.	7-10 a.m.	Jane Bingel
		Vol. Sat. Project 1: Facilities and Grounds	8:30 a.m.	Patrick Hayes
Jan. 14	Sun.	Down on the Farm Meeting	4 p.m.	Becky Brignac
Jan. 17	Wed.	Track the Trails	10-11:30 a.m.	Anne Tincher
Jan. 18	Thurs.	Hanson Garden Workday	9 a.m.	Chris LaChance
Jan. 20	Sat.	ABNC Annual Members Meeting	10-11:30 a.m.	Ephram Dickson
		Girl Scouts Badge Work	9:45 a.m.-3 p.m.	Kim Wasserman
		Vol. Sat. Project 1: Stewardship	8:30 a.m.	Jim Callan/Mark Kramer
		Vol. Sat. Project 2: Facilities and Grounds	8:30 a.m.	Patrick Hayes
Jan. 24	Wed.	New Volunteer Orientation.	6:30-8:30 p.m.	Kim Wasserman
Jan. 27	Sat.	Girl Scouts Badge Work	9:45 a.m.-3 p.m.	Kim Wasserman
		Vol. Sat. Project 1: Facilities and Grounds	8:30 a.m.	Patrick Hayes
Jan. 28	Sun.	Birthday Party; Reptiles	2-4 p.m.	Kim Wasserman

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 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.

A Publication of the Armand Bayou
 Nature Center Volunteers
 "Interested + Involved + Informed"
 8500 Bay Area Blvd.
 Box 58828
 Houston, TX 77258
 www.abnc.org
 (281) 474-2551
 (281) 474-2552 - FAX
 abnc@ghgcorp.com

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 Organization
 U.S. Postage
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 Seabrook, Texas
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