

B a y o u F o l i a g e

July 2003

Printing Compliments of Celanese

Vol. 22, No. 7

look AHEAD

July 2003

- 3 Volunteer Board Meeting, 6pm
- 8 Deadline Bayou Foliage
- 10 Volunteer Meeting, 6:30pm
- 26 Staff/Volunteer Luncheon, noon

August 2003

- 7 Volunteer Board Meeting, 6pm
- 8 Deadline Bayou Foliage*
- 14 Volunteer Meeting, 6:30pm

September 2003

- Saturdays Volunteer Training
- 4 Volunteer Board Meeting, 6pm
- 9 Deadline Bayou Foliage
- 11 Volunteer Meeting, 6:30pm

* - early deadline due to month beginning on Friday

volunteer of the MONTH

Has anyone noticed the huge number of school kids we've had running around here lately with sweep nets and dip nets in their hands? If you have, you've probably noticed Sandy Watters leading the way! She is the tall one, with the wide brimmed straw hat and friendly smile, who has become an essential member of the weekday education team.

"I just need to have nature in my life," she says, "I lived in New York for a year and a half and I found myself searching for nature and visiting the botanical gardens every week."

Lucky for us, when she moved to the Houston area Sandy quickly found her niche volunteering with outdoor education at the Nature Center. She became a volunteer in the fall of 2000.

Once a Speech Therapist, she enjoys working with children and "introducing them to nature." Sandy is one of the most enthusiastic teachers in nature's

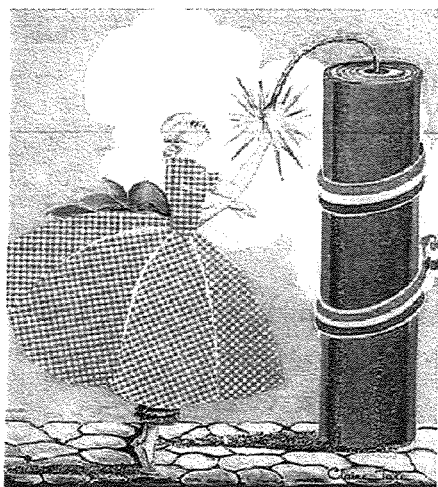
classroom. "This is such a wonderful place," she says about ABNC, "I am always learning something new or seeing a new plant or insect. It's great to work with such interesting people and to meet others that are fascinated with the outdoors."

Sandy participates in trail hikes, farm life demos and hands on history classes, along with the insect, pond life, and nature discovery programs.

When not volunteering with us, you can find Sandy . . . outside! She has a butterfly garden that she spends time working on and observing. She also sets aside time to focus on her art, which has involved painting and print making for the past 15 years.

Next time you see Sandy, let her know how much we appreciate the cheerful smile and creative energy she donates to our nature center!

- James Blueberry



Happy Independence Day!



abnc volunteer MEETING MINUTES

from meeting on June 12, 2003

The guest speaker was Glenn Olsen, representing the Native Plant Society of Texas. Glenn gave a presentation on native plants that are hosts for butterflies.

Following the educational program, Chairman Stan Krauhs opened the business portion of the meeting at 8:20 PM.

Minutes of the May 8 meeting were approved. The Treasurer's Report was printed in the June issue of the Bayou Foliage.

Area Reports:

Vice Chair (Polly Swerdlin):

Polly announced that Candy Donahue would give a presentation on the Tallow Tree Mulching Project at the July meeting.

A new program to review the existing inventory of videotapes has been established. Volunteers can receive 1 hour of continuing education credit by reviewing one of the selected tapes and writing a short summary.

The Prairie burn class led by Mark Kramer was cancelled because of the recent Nature Center power failure. It will be rescheduled.

Polly asked the volunteer group to provide questions and discussion topics for the July 26 Volunteer/Staff brown bag lunch meeting.

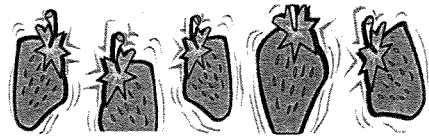
In response to a question about continuing education requirements, Polly explained that "only 8 hours are required each year and you just earned one of them by being here tonight."

Staff Report (Sam Harwell):

Sam announced that Sandy Watters was named Volunteer of the Month.

Marsh Mania was successful, although the turnout was a little less than expected. 54 volunteers participated and over 1100 plants were planted. The remaining plants will be planted on Stewardship Saturdays.

The Nature Center experienced a total power failure on June 4 when lightning struck the transformers. Some areas were



without power for 7 days. Most of the cost will be covered by insurance.

EcoCamp is proceeding very well. Attendance may exceed that of last year.

Sam announced that Mary Coleman had resigned. Mary had been serving as coordinator of Educational Programs. Plans are to refill the position, although job duties may be slightly revised.

In response to a question about the status of the bison, Sam said that it is definitely intended to acquire additional bison. Options are being studied.

Weekend Trails (Stan Krauhs):

Stan said that because of decreased interest during the hot summer months, there would be no volunteer guides during August. Coverage will continue in June and July since these months were previously scheduled. The schedule will be re-evaluated prior to September.

Stan adjourned the meeting at 8:45 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Bill Cooke

july PROGRAM: TALLOW CONTROL

Candy is a third-generation native Texan, and has lived in Chile, Montgomery County, Lubbock, and Houston. She was a CPA for 20+ years, but has volunteered extensively at nature centers, including ABNC. She completed the Certified Naturalist course at Houston Arboretum where she was weekend trail guide coordinator, trainer and school tour guide, did their Nature 101 course and the Master Naturalist course. Candy decided she needed

to get a job in the field that she was volunteering all her spare time, so she is now at Rice University, and has just finished her first of two years for a masters degree in Ecology and Evolutionary Biology.

Candy's description of her presentation:

"My section of the department at Rice extensively studies Chinese tallow trees. I knew of the previous success ABNC had in the 5 Star Grant area where they aerially sprayed and mulched the tallow trees, with little tallow

re-growth. The opportunity last fall to study a similar project at ABNC (mulching live trees this time) was one I could not pass up. I have a slide presentation with comparative photos of the efforts, problems encountered and preliminary results."

- Polly Swerdlin



a special THANK YOU FROM NASA

(copy of a letter sent to Ed Adams after an outreach event)

Dear Ed,

How can I thank you enough! The NASA/JSC spring safety fair, "Work to Win With Safety," was our most successful fair yet, thanks in no small part to your participation, your willingness, and your group's interaction with the estimated 4000-plus visitors who showed up. It was a great day!

Safety and health have never been easy subjects to sell, but when they are couched in a fun surrounding such as the fair and knowledgeable people are willing to share what they know, the crowd draw is reflected in kind. Wow! They did show up, didn't they?

I hope also that you felt the same sense of reward by taking part in the fair that we at JSC did in having the benefit of your expertise. Most of all, I hope you will join us for next year's fair, Friday, May 7. It wouldn't be nearly so much fun or as worthwhile without you.

Warmest Regards,

Rindy Carmichael (Event Coordinator)



california BULRUSH GRANT GETS GROWING

ABNC has been awarded a grant from the US Fish and Wildlife Service to research and grow California Bulrush from seed for marsh restoration work.

Schoenplectus californicus is widely planted in Gulf Coast marsh projects where the water depth is too great or salinity too low for Smooth Cordgrass or other reliable native species. Bulrush is also unpalatable to Nutria, grass carp and other herbivores, which often damage newly established cordgrass plants. There are many areas in Armand Bayou that were marshland before subsidence, but currently have 2 to 3 foot water depths. This is too deep for Smooth Cordgrass but fine for California Bulrush. So, this plant may prove to be

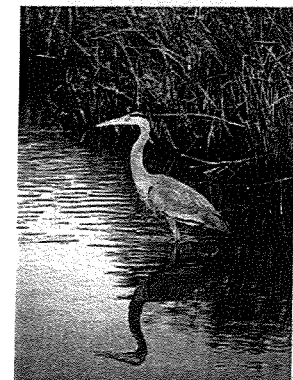
a good choice for larger marsh reestablishment projects here. However, the usual method of propagating Bulrush is by digging and transplanting mature plants and this process is very labor and time intensive. If these plants can be easily grown from seed in quantity, the labor of marsh restoration would be reduced.

Under this grant, ABNC staff will experiment with growing these plants from seed in pots. Seeds were collected in Armand Bayou in early June from stands of bulrush established in previous marsh restoration plantings. They are being dried, sorted and prepared for planting at this writing. Propagation techniques are being researched to

determine if anyone has grown these plants from seed, and if so, how it was done. Once growing procedures are set, 1500 bulrush plants are to be produced in ABNC's aquatic growing beds near the greenhouse for future marsh restoration in Armand Bayou.

This project runs through the summer. Take a look out in the growing beds and talk to Mark or myself about how the work is going.

- George Regmund



This is the second installment of our series of articles from a biography about Armand Yrametegui, taken from The Houston Review: History and Culture of the Gulf Coast, Vol. XVII, No. 1, 1995. A very special thank you to Judy Sharp for passing this along to the Foliage!

As Armand and his brother grew older, they proved themselves able students and hard workers. Their father, himself self-educated, encouraged their interests and discipline. Every summer, the two brothers had to spend at least two hours in the house each day, reading or learning something new. At the same time, their father taught them mechanical and vocational skills, such as roofing and car repair, at which he was adept. Neither son disappointed him, as they both fulfilled his fondest wish for them in obtaining a college education. After brief military service, Armand graduated from Rice Institute in 1947 with a degree in electrical engineering, and Hector completed a degree in geology from the University of Texas at Austin. Once out of college, Armand moved to Mexico where he joined a partnership in radio manufacturing. The venture proved unsuccessful, however, and he returned to Houston within a few years. For the next several years, he managed his family's rental property and considered new career directions. At this point of uncertainty in his life, Armand very unexpectedly found his purpose. He purchased 10 acres of bayou land in the vicinity of T. C. Jester Boulevard. Wanting to know how to identify trees on the property, he began attending meetings of a local nature study group, the Houston Outdoor Nature Club. When the club sponsored a bird-watching field trip, Armand accompanied them, quite prepared for personal amusement at the intense enthusiast. Instead, he himself became

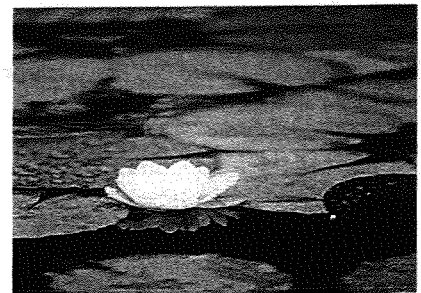
fascinated. In due course, he became an assistant scoutmaster for the Boy Scouts and served as president of the East Texas Ornithological Society. More and more, he based his career in nature studies and conservation. This work became his life.

In one respect, this newfound absorption was surprising. As a boy, Armand had collected rocks and bugs, memorably bringing home on a few occasions a coral snake, a black widow spider and a tarantula, but never had shown any sustained interest in the natural environment. He had never been a Boy Scout. Yet, in other respects, this course was entirely typical and inevitable, for as a person, he was never bored with life. Friends were always impressed with his great enthusiasm and range of interests. He was, for example, a devoted baseball fan, while also maintaining a regular attendance at the symphony and opera. Given his breadth of interests, few felt they knew him completely and most conceded that they saw only certain phases of his life. As one long-term associate described this quality, he was a very "private person in a public arena." Possibly only the study of nature could encompass all his diverse interests. He became a true ecologist, who studied interrelationships, and became interested in people as they related to ecosystems.

Developing this avocation, Armand initiated an intensive self-study program, becoming proficient in botany, ornithology, conchology, and ecology. He purchased more land with the goal of shaping its environment and later selling it to developers as an illustration of balancing ecological and human needs. He began taking trips to Central and South America, fascinated with the tropics and their richness of life. He had a special curiosity about tropical birds, perhaps sensing the same type of vibrancy that he possessed.

Naturally, a man of such energy and growing conviction about environmental issues soon became politically active. In 1959, the *Houston Chronicle* noted when Armand Yramstegui [sic] decried the pending establishment of a second golf course in Memorial Park with the attendant destruction of numerous trees. He gave monthly reports on conservation topics before the Outdoor Nature Club and started contacting state and national representatives about pending legislation. With the aid of an ad hoc committee bearing the ambitious label of Texas Beaches Unlimited, he mobilized enough public support to secure passage of the Texas Open Beaches law, which preserved shore access for the public. He next transformed the Texas Beaches Unlimited committee into the Texas Conservation Council, with himself as president. With this base, he appeared with increasing frequency before legislative and congressional committees, testifying on behalf of such goals as the Padre Island National Seashore, the establishment of the Big Thicket National Preserve, stronger water and air pollution control laws, and protection of submerged lands. In the late 1960s, he and others campaigned successfully to defeat a poorly considered and unrealistic water plan that would have increased dependence on out of state sources, offered little estuary protection and cost billions.

Continued in next month's Bayou Foliage.



u p c o m i n g C A L E N D A R

Continuing Ed

July 10	Tallow Mulching Project	Candy Donahue
August 14	Brazoria Nat'l Wildlife Refuge	Tom Schneider
September 11	Wildlife Rehabilitation	Sharon Smaltz
October 9	Mosquitoes & West Nile Virus	Ray Parsons
November 13	Wetlands	Dr. John Jacob

Events

July	EcoCamp
July 26	Staff/Volunteer Luncheon
August	EcoCamp
October 18	Staff/Volunteer Luncheon
October 24-25	Creepy Crawlers
October 30-Nov. 1	Science Teachers' Conference

Classes & Trips

September TBD	Animal Handling
September Saturdays	New Volunteer Training
October 4	Field Trip to Katy Prairie
December TBD	Prairie Burn
February 2004	Animal Handling



2003 VOLUNTEER BOARD

Chair	Stan Krauhs	281.470.2744	krauhs@wt.net
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Wkday Outdoor Educ.	Jane Bingel	281.554.5069	
Outreach	Ed Adams	713.946.2754	
Facilities	Chuck Snyder	281.480.1550	chuck-snyder@houston.rr.com

Volunteer Page

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If you have articles for the *Bayou Foliage* you may phone or email them to Jim and Sylvia.

Armand Bayou Nature Center

TREASURER'S REPORT

May 2003

Beginning Balance	\$3021.48
Expenditures:	
Bank Service Charge:	2.00
Postage-Bayou Foliage:	
March-May	106.25
Total Expenditures	\$108.25
Income:	
Earth Day	199.14
Senior Day	65.00
Paper Recycling April	11.25
Plants	2.00
Total Income	\$277.39
Current Balance	\$3190.62

Marsh Mania Update

Marsh Mania 2003 occurred on May 31st, with 54 people turning out to get filthy. We planted 1047 plants from one gallon containers. Varieties included California bulrush, square stem rush, black needlerush, big cordgrass, cuttgrass, and spider and swamp lillies. Most of the volunteers got to the seven separate planting sites by canoe, where they were eventually forced to learn Mark Kramer's "Bayou Crawl." Talk to one of the Marsh Maniacs for details. The post planting lunch was catered by Neptune Sub Shop and the Galveston Bay Foundation, sponsor of the event, gave out door prizes.

- Jim Krzmarzick

Summer Help Needed

As you can see by the blank slots on the July Volunteer Duty Ruster, summer is upon us. Even the most diligent of our volunteers must go on vacation every now and again. Have you been meaning to get out to the Center and put in some hours? Well, now is the perfect time to do it! Come spend an afternoon at the farm house...there is almost always a strong breeze off the lake. Is air conditioning a must for you this time of year? Then, spend a few hours doing demos in the education building or welcome the public in the admissions building (Jo is great company!). Call the applicable coordinator and sign up today!

- Sylvia Krzmarzick

s t a f f D I R E C T O R Y

Executive Director	Sam Harwell
Director of Educational Development	Pat Slaughter
Education Program Manager	
Director of Development	Lynn Shigekawa
Stewardship Coordinator	Mark Kramer
Volunteer Coordinator	James Blueberry
Senior Naturalist	George Regmund
Visitor Services Coordinator	Jo Evans
Front Desk	Dick Phelps
Animal Collections Assistant	Chris Battan
Facilities Coordinator	Ken Lester
Accountant/Marketing	Terri Wimberly

Phone 281-474-2551

Email: abnc@ghgcorp.com Web: www.abnc.org

abnc volunteer DUTY ROSTER

If you have to cancel, please do your best to find your own replacement. If you can cover for any blank slots below, please call the coordinator for that event. When you arrive at ABNC for your duty please check in at the front desk with Jo Evans. Thanks!

DATE	11:00 TRAIL Coordinator, Odie Asscherick	2:00 TRAIL Coordinator, Odie Asscherick	GREETERS Coordinator, Judy Schaefer	FARM INTERP Coordinator, Judy Schaefer	FARM DEMO Coordinator, Stephania Rogers	NAT HISTORY DEMO Stephania Rogers
SAT 7/5	<i>Pat Doerr</i>	<i>Stan Krauhs</i>	<i>Pat Bates</i>		<i>Anne Tincher Rope Making</i>	<i>Marilyn Clark Lizards</i>
SUN 7/6	<i>NO TRAIL SUN AT 11:00 AM</i>	<i>Marie Asscherick</i>	<i>Ken Russell</i>		<i>Mary Ann Tucker Basket Weaving</i>	<i>Zel Arbuckle Snakes</i>
SAT 7/12	<i>Jim Crabb</i>	<i>Ray Parker</i>	<i>Judy Schaefer</i>	<i>Paula Thorson</i>	<i>Ed Adams Rope Making</i>	
SUN 7/13	<i>NO TRAIL SUN AT 11:00 AM</i>	<i>Marie Asscherick</i>	<i>Mary Yurkovich</i>	<i>Polly Swerdlin</i>	<i>Stephania Rogers Butter Making</i>	
SAT 7/19	<i>Patti Pennington</i>	<i>Joe Bryan</i>	<i>Rich Watts</i>	<i>Linda Watts</i>		<i>Marilyn Clark Armadillos</i>
SUN 7/20	<i>NO TRAIL SUN AT 11:00 AM</i>	<i>Stan Krauhs</i>	<i>Pat Bates</i>	<i>Stephania Rogers</i>	<i>Helen Harger Cheese Making</i>	<i>Ruby Dilgren Spiders</i>
SAT 7/26	<i>Polly Swerdlin</i>	<i>Jo Ann Carr</i>	<i>Betty Snider</i>	<i>Paula Thorson</i>	<i>Polly Swerdlin Stereoscope</i>	<i>Jane Bingel Corn Husk Dolls</i>
SUN 7/27	<i>NO TRAIL SUN AT 11:00 AM</i>	<i>Merle Bunde</i>	<i>Paul Brunkow</i>	<i>Joan Brunkow</i>	<i>Dottie Evans Rope Making</i>	<i>Eleanor Stanley Reptiles</i>



A publication of Armand Bayou Nature Center Volunteers

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