



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

## Christmas Edition

December 2005

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Vol. 24 No. 12

### look AHEAD

#### December 2005

- 1 Volunteer Board Meeting, 6pm
- 3 Prairie Burn Class, 10-4pm
- 7 Volunteer Party, 6-9pm
- 17 Christmas Bird Count, 6am-9pm
- 25 **Merry Christmas!!!**

#### January 2005

#### Happy New Year!

- 5 Volunteer Board Meeting, 6pm
- 12 Volunteer Appreciation, 6-9pm

#### February 2005

- 2 Volunteer Board Meeting, 6pm
- 9 Volunteer Meeting, 6-9pm
- 23 First Day of Master Naturalist



### Volunteer of the MONTH

He may seem like the strong silent type, but once you get him started talking about plants, he will talk your ear off! Of course I am talking about our December Volunteer of the month **Ray Parker!**

Believe it or not, Ray has been a faithful volunteer at abnc for over 20 years, so long even HE can't remember when he actually started. He says his interest in plants is what first brought him out to the nature center, an interest peaked by our native plant sales (a now defunct program). While attending the plant sale he noticed that the nature center was in need of volunteers...and the rest is history!

Originally from the area now known as North Shore, Ray is retired from Crown Central Petroleum and Oil Company. He is very active in the Native Plant Society of Texas and a member of the Houston Arboretum, which he says he would visit more, if only if was located a little closer to home.

Ray is know as a "Trail Guide," at least to folks like me, who see the pattern of volunteers who lead them time and time again, let me tell you, "there ain't much variation." One has

to figure there must be something that draws people like Ray out to walk the same trails over and over again. In fact when asked what his favorite part was about volunteering at the nature center he just shrugged his big shoulders and said "bein' out in the woods I guess."

Not that trails are all Ray Parker can do, no siree. He is adept at rope making, candle making, syrup making, and has given garden tours, when we had them, of course. He is even burn trained and has participated in our winter burn program!

Ray's dedication has not gone unnoticed by others as well. "He rarely says no when he is asked to volunteer," says Jane Bingel. "He is the most dependable person-always pleasant- I have never seen him angry, even when he has a RIGHT to be," says Jane.

Ray is the kind of volunteer all of us should strive to be, dependable and loyal to the end. If we only had more like you Ray, the nature center would never have a volunteer shortage! Thanks for all do, -abnc



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## FROM THE CHAIR

By the time you read this, Fall Festival and our annual Christmas party will be behind us. They will cap off what's been a great year at ABNC. Of course, this is the time when we look back to remember what happened during the year that just flew by, so let me note some of the highlights.

We enjoyed a wonderful Earth Day event, and hopefully the celebration will just get better each year. The Gem Crew completed the Canopy Walkway, which is the major project of the Inner Loop concept. Bayou Boil was extremely successful, and the problems of last year were absent. We had a great Picnic at the Farmhouse. Owl Prowls were the surprise hit

of the year. After a lackluster year before, guided canoe trips on Armand Bayou were always busy. The prairie burn season was the most successful ever. The project to concrete the floor of the Maintenance Barn was completed following two years of Volunteer contributions, cooperation from the Staff who shared funds from fence repairs, and finally a generous contribution from one of our stalwart Volunteers.

And we had fun celebrating Lew Hornung's birthday (in the vicinity of 80).

We also had some great programs during the year. We listened to Gary and Cathy Clark, Dennis Jones from Brazos Bend, Meredith Magnuson who gave us a lesson in animal

handling, Jane Bock who told us amazing tales of hummingbirds, Hana Ginzburg who spoke of her efforts to protect Armand Bayou and its surrounding land after Armand was no longer there. And finally, Alecyia Gallaway who taught us some of the history of the Clear Creek area.

During this past year, we've reestablished the close working relationship between Volunteers and Staff. I think it's been a pretty good year, but there have been some bumps in the road. My single biggest disappointment is that we still haven't put together an effective Volunteer recruiting and training program. We did have a good orientation session this fall which

should provide some pointers for our future efforts, but there's a lot more to do. I believe that the incoming Board is thinking about a Membership Secretary position, and that may help a lot.

Thanks for the privilege of letting me serve as your Chairman for these past two years. Your new board is experienced, enthusiastic, and full of ideas. I know they'll do a great job. Please give them your support. As usual, I'll

See you on the Bayou,

Bill



## 2005 ARMAND BAYOU NATURE CENTER VOLUNTEER BOARD

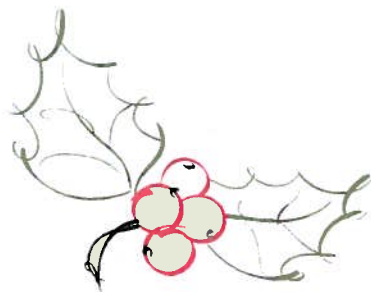
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What's Happening at ABNC!

It's Christmas Time at ABNC!

Instead of the usual Volunteer Meeting, the December meeting is...a party! Come gather with us this December 14th and share stories from Fall Festival and Creepy Crawlers while enjoying fabulous food and your beverage of choice. Please bring a dish of your choosing and a smile!

Hopefully someone will bring some Christmas CD's, or maybe someone will break into song with carols! See everyone on the 14th!



Staff Roster

Executive Director	Ned Van Maanen	Ext 11
Associate Director	Candy Donahue	Ext 18
Education Director	Heather Millar	Ext 14
Programs Coordinator	Shauna Trevino	Ext 13
Stewardship Coordinator	Mark Kramer	Ext 15
Stewardship Biologist	George Regmund	Ext 31
Stewardship Technician	Christine Mattox	Ext 32
Visitors Services	Jessalyn Ballard	Ext 10
Visitors Services	Dick Phelps	Ext 10
Accountant	Susan Brown	Ext 21
Facilities	Lew Hornung	Ext 16
Lab Manager (animals)	Megan McInnis	Ext 17

To the Volunteers and Staff

Yesterday, Ned gave me an envelope with your generous donations in memory of my father. I was overwhelmed by your generosity. Through the past weeks, I have been truly uplifted by your words, questions about how my Mom was doing, how my daughter Katy was doing and general demonstrations of your care and concern. I am exceedingly lucky to work among such wonderful people. I am inspired by you always, thank you so very much. I will talk

to my brother and mother and probably donate the money to Houston Hospice, who have helped us and many others in similar situations.

Thank you again, from the bottom of my heart.

-Candy

