



Bayou Foliage

Volume 26, Number 5

May 2007

Look Ahead

MAY

- 5 Stewardship Saturday, 8:30 a.m.
- 10 Volunteer Board Mtg. 5:30 p.m. CR3
- 10 Volunteer Meeting/ Picnic 6:30 p.m.
- 12 HAS Bird Survey, 7 a.m.
- 19 Stewardship Saturday, 8:30 a.m.
- 19 Bayou Boil
Tuesdays & Fridays, Stewardship Chainsaw Days

JUNE

- 2 Stewardship Saturday, 8:30 a.m.
- 9 HAS Bird Survey, 7 a.m.
- 16 Stewardship Saturday, 8:30 a.m.

When you are finished with this publication please recycle it.
Thanks!

Volunteer Spotlight

Dottie Evans began volunteering at ABNC ten years ago, the spring of 1997. She had recently moved to Texas from Kansas City, Missouri to be close to her family after her husband passed away. She had been a zoo docent in KC and wanted to continue nature type volunteering. ABNC was closer than the Houston zoo, but she quickly found it was completely different.

Dottie was born in Missouri, but calls Maine the place she grew up since she was there in her teen

years. She has a business administration degree, and worked as a computer programmer on



Dottie Evans, left, being presented with the Volunteer of the Month certificate by Candy Donahue.

a 650 IBM in 1957, but was mostly a stay-at-home mom.

In addition to her current position as Admissions Coordinator, she served as Outreach Coordinator and has taught many a weekday class to visiting school and scout groups. She has led trail hikes, is a deckhand on the pontoon boat, and also enjoys helping with owl prowls. As a volunteer, Dottie shares the importance of conserving resources, and making a difference in our community.

She is a Texas Master Naturalist and also volunteers at Space Center

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Staff Spotlight

This month we are spotlighting faithful ABNC employee, Dick Phelps. For the past seven years Dick has managed the front desk on Sundays from 12:00 - 5:00. He also pitches in during special events and when the nature center is short staffed.

During his tenure he has only missed work three times; once for vacation and the other two times for his "ring and valve" job: brain and heart surgery. He is proud of the fact he only missed one Sunday after each surgery.

Dressed in his ABNC khaki shirt and slacks you might not guess that Dick is such a colorful character. But pull up a chair and you will learn that this gentleman has a sense of humor in keeping with his New York heritage. Here's an exam-

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**Polly Swerdlin
Chair 2007**

**Armand Bayou
Nature Center
Volunteer Board
2007**

**Staff
Roster**

From the Rocking Chair

I'm looking at a blank piece of paper, wondering what to write. Most of the time it's fairly easy, something about the time of year, perhaps a special event, somebody special, any number of subjects available. May will be our last meeting before taking the summer off. We are "gearing up" for Bayou Boil, and we all hope it is even more successful than ever.

I am pleased with the efforts by volunteers. Our Brainstorm list is being whittled down one by one, either done already or assigned to various groups to make it happen. The staff has been under tremendous stress lately, but several folks have

stepped up to help out when most needed. That's what this place and being a volunteer is all about.

And now Earth Day is done. Reports from others are still to be written, but what I saw, it was a very good show. There was certainly more than the average Saturday crowd. I visited the auditorium once and got my free Clean Water blue bag, Trash Bash T-shirt, and recycled-blue-jeans-&-plastic-ruler. Tom had the youngsters hammering away creating their very own bird house from the scrap fence boards. Eleanor and I had a great time selling cookies, blue-jeans handbags and lemonade.

Speaking of cookies; the winners are: 3rd Place, Jessalyn Ballard's chocolate chips, 2nd Place, Gaye Batiz's oatmeal raisins, and our 1st Place winner (drum roll please), Jane Krauhs' excellent, gooey and crispy just right brownie! Kudos for everyone who brought goodies to sell. They were all very popular.

Don't forget; May is our Picnic. Bring a dish to share. Coffee, iced tea and lemonade will be provided. BYOB if you wish.

Polly

"How many mouths Nature has to fill, how many neighbors we have, how little we know about them and how seldom we get in each other's way!" John Muir

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Mark Kramer	Ext 15	George Regmund	Ext 31
Christine Mattox	Ext 32	Shauna Trevino	Ext 13

Email addresses are 'firstname'@abnc.org. Example: candy@abnc.org

ABNC Volunteer Meeting Minutes March 8, 2007

Program – Cathy and Gary Clark presented a slide show on their new book “Texas Gulf Coast Impressions”. There was a book signing after the talk with proceeds benefiting ABNC. There will be books available for purchase in the gift shop.

Old Business

Secretary report – The March report was approved.

Treasurer report - The March treasury report was approved. We spent \$1210 on the windmill and now have \$1533 in the treasury.

Bylaws – The revisions were approved as written after a short discussion on the article about requirements to be a voting member of the organization.

Windmill – It is possible that there will be an extra \$1050 in the windmill fund. In a future meeting (May or September) the volunteer organization will decide what to do with this windfall. Maybe a windmill maintenance fund?

New Business

Tally Sheet – a sheet has been developed to gather information on how new visitors heard about the

center. Greeters will be in charge of filling out the sheet.

Events - April 21 is Earth Day. A signup sheet is now available. There will be a contest for best recipes for the cookie sales. Prizes will be awarded.

Bayou Boil is May 19. A sign-up sheet is available.

The Fuddruckers fund raiser was a success. 2-3 scholarships will be funded by this event for children staying at the Bridge (a women’s shelter) to attend Eco Camp.

Vice Chair Report

Meeting topics: Andy Sipicz will discuss Armand Bayou hydro ecology on May 10.

Continuing Education. - The April 7 wildflower tour was cancelled due to rain. The mushrooms tour is scheduled for April 14. Chris LaChance’s Water Smart workshop was well attended. Canoe 101 will be held on May 5 for volunteers who want to work with canoe activities but do not know how to canoe. It will be held in Mays Pond. On June 16 Julie Massey of the local extension office will present “Something Fishy on the Bayou.”

Sea animals will be discussed and dissected.

Staff

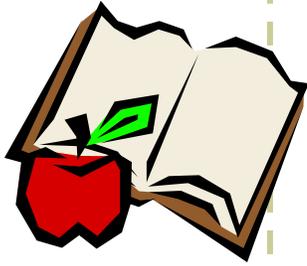
- We will have a six month experiment with a farmer’s market. Seabrook’s existing market will move to our parking lot every other Saturday beginning April 14 from 1-3. Starting in May it will operate from 10-1. ABNC volunteers who have their own garden are able to participate. We will get \$50 each time the market operates.
- A new animal handling class designed by Heather and Rhonda Murgutaroyd (ABNC board member with animal expertise) will require demonstration on ability to handle the animals for extended lengths of time.
- Heather needs volunteers for the McGovern Center (Pre-K). If you see kids bigger than this in the center feel free to kick them out. Larger kids have been walking on the fence rails and causing damage. This center was developed for young kids and their parents only.
- Megan is applying for an internship with the Houston Zoo. If she gets the job we will have to cover for her at times during these months.
- Lotus Notes is up and running.
- We have received two grants and a check for stewardship. The money covers tallow control, water hyacinth control, and prairie maintenance.
- Candy would appreciate a mail courier. This is someone who would make runs to the PO box near Nasa Rd 1 to retrieve our mail on a frequent basis.
- Our volunteer of the month is Dottie Evans. She has been considerable help during the transition of a new front desk person.

Treasurer’s Report

Beginning Balance		\$2,729.10
Expenditures:		
Volunteer Speaker gift	\$25.00	
ABNC Windmill Fund	\$1,210.00	
Total Expenditures	\$1,235.00	
Income:		
Recycle Jan.	\$ 19.68	
Donation for Jessalyn	\$ 20.00	
Total Income	\$ 39.68	
Current Balance		\$1,533.78

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Continuing Education



Continuing Education is free for ABNC volunteers

Canoe 101 May 5

This class is for volunteers who want to work with canoe activities but do not know how to canoe. It will be held in Mays Pond.

Something Fishy on the Bayou June 16

Julie Massey of the Galveston County Extension Office will present this class. Sea animals will be discussed and dissected.

Upcoming Programs

**Volunteer Meetings
2nd Thursday of each
month @ 7 p.m.**



May 10

Eco-hydrology of the Armand Bayou Watershed by Andy Sipocz, Texas Parks and Wildlife

June–August

No volunteer meeting in the summer. See you in September!



(Continued from page 3)

Area Reports :

Admissions - Dottie - Be nice to Kelly. She is doing a good job at the front desk and is very enthusiastic.

Greeters/Interpreters - Jarita - Need new greeters due to some of our existing greeters being unavailable.

Weekend Demos - Jane Bingel - no report.

Weekend Trails - Martha - slots open for May.

Weekday Outdoor Ed/Farm - Gaye - Weekday class slots available.

Outreach - Nancy - no report

Facilities - J. T. - Birdhouses made from used Cedar fence pickets have been completed and are available for sale. The mower shed has been completed. It still needs to be painted.

Stewardship - Ian - Trash Bash was cancelled due to rain and lightning. The next big event is Marsh Mania on June 2

Newsletter - Mary and Mary Alice - This month's deadline is April 21.

Please place items for Bayou Foliage in the "Bayou Foliage" box in the volunteer office or email to Mary Alice at matrubble@verizon.net.

The beautiful new windmill purchased with volunteer funds.

Photos by George Regmund

Bayou Foliage



Dick never tires of explaining the many features of ABNC to the hordes of visitors that arrive on his shift.

(Continued from page 1) Staff Spotlight

ple: When asked what he wanted the volunteers to know about him, he stated with a sly smile “That I am an SOB to work with”. Now that is funny!

Dick has always been a hard working man, starting with the three jobs he held down while attending college. He worked in the cafeteria “slinging hash,” went on to become a radio announcer working at three different radio stations and while in Pennsylvania learned to wire houses. He was quick to inform me that none of the houses burned down. Dick became a Petty Officer in the Navy during the Korean War. After that he went to work for GTE (now Verizon) and even made time to own a bar and restaurant. With all these life



experiences under his belt you can see why Dick enjoys the autonomy of working the Sunday shift at ABNC.

Dick never tires of explaining the many features of ABNC to the hordes of visitors that arrive on his shift. And he is not afraid to chase down those who forget to pay or bring their pets and/or bicycles in by mistake. Dick knows his way around that front desk and can be called on for emergencies especially if they involve the cash register or balancing the day’s receipts. ABNC is lucky to have such a dedicated person as Dick on staff. If you decide to volunteer on Sunday, and I suggest you do just to spend time with this amazing man, may I suggest you bring along a package of coconut macaroons. They are Dick’s favorite!

Article by Mary McCarthy

(Continued from page 1) Volunteer Spotlight

Houston. In addition, she found time to serve as a zoo docent for the past 20 years.

Dottie loves to read, swim and spend time on the water, wishing she had a boat. Time with her grandchildren is precious, and she has even taken up birding. Several trips with George, the Galapagos Islands...what is next?

Article by Candy Donahue

The “greening” of the prairie after a successful winter burn season



Photos by George Regmund

Volunteer Job Descriptions

TRAIL TOUR INTERPRETER

Responsibilities:

1. Arrive at ABNC 15 minutes before tour time.
2. Gather group who has come for the tour.
3. Promote ABNC's purposes and benefits of membership.
4. Interpret basic ecological concepts to visitors.
5. Give participants a chance to ask questions.
6. Ensure safety of group.
7. Refrain from using ethnic comments or sexist remarks.
8. Maintain professional attitude and conduct. Refrain from eating, drinking, chewing gum or smoking while on duty.
9. Know location of First Aid Kit and Fire Extinguisher.
10. Promptly report accident or injury to a staff member and fill out accident form.



11. Log hours in volunteer logbook in a prompt, up-to-date fashion.
12. Notify volunteer coordinator ASAP if you are unable to do your assigned job.

Support and Resources:

1. ABNC staff and volunteers
2. Volunteer training
3. Volunteer manual

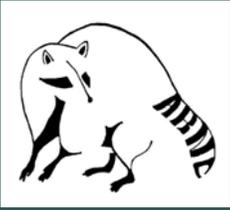
4. Field Guides

Qualifications:

1. Be able to speak before a group.
2. Be knowledgeable in the subject matter presented.
3. Be aware of basic ecological concepts.
4. Be knowledgeable of ABNC regulations and membership information.

Training:

1. Attend orientation.
2. Complete appropriate volunteer training.
3. Watch and listen to an experienced volunteer at least once.



This job's for you!

Each month a description of a volunteer position will be highlighted. The following information is from the Volunteer Manual.

Armand Bayou Forest

The forest surrounding Armand Bayou is a special type determined by the geology of the area. Ours is termed a **riparian forest**, meaning it is found adjacent to and following a waterway. Because this area's forests are riparian and there are numerous bayous and streams here, we see fingers of forestland running throughout the area. Usually there are expanses of grassland between the strips of riparian forest. This local diversity of habitat creates large expanses where the edges of two different habitats meet. Known as **ecotones**, these transitional

zones form a special place where plants and animals take advantage of the resources from more than one habitat type.

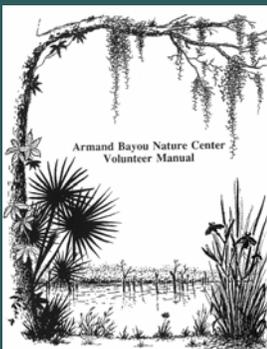
Our forest adjoins the bayou because of the water's long influence on the soil around it. During periodic flooding, the bayou deposited courser, sandier soil particles on its banks, along with a rich broth of nutrients. Unlike the heavy gumbo soil of the prairie, this sandier soil is conducive to tree growth. Soil maps of the area show the forest edge following the change in soil type identi-

cally, reflecting the tree's preference for the coarser soils along the bayou.

The nature center's location on the upper Texas coast places it in a biological crossroads where several large habitat types converge and blend. This can be seen in the diversity of our forest. The major tree species include several species of oaks (water, willow, post, and red), elms, ash and hackberry, from the huge southern mixed forest which covers most of the southern US, plus a scattering of loblolly pines from east Texas in areas of better drainage. Below the forest

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From the ABNC Volunteer Manual



ABNC Volunteer Duty Roster

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

	9:30 Trails	2:00 Trails	Greeters	Farm Interpretation	Farm Demos	Natural History
DATE	Martha Hood 281-286-6746	Martha Hood 281-286-6746	Jarita Sepulvado 281-532-1273	Jarita Sepulvado 281-479-8795	Jane Bingel 281-554-5069	Jane Bingel 281-554-5069
5/5	Stan Krauhs	Anne Tincher	Joan Henderson	Eleanor Stanley	Jane Bingel Corn Husk Dolls	Mary Barton Birds
5/6		OPEN	Ken Russell	Stephania Rogers	Ed Adams Butter	Zel Arbuckle Snakes
5/12	Gaye Batiz	Liz VanOrstrand	Judy Schaefer	Jane Bingel	Tom Scarsella Wood Shop	Polly Swerdlin Tracks
5/13		Marie Asscherick	Martha Hood	Polly Swerdlin	Helen Harger Cheese	Eleanor Stanley Snakes
5/19	Melanie Weisman	Ray Parker	OPEN	OPEN	Polly Swerdlin Rope	Jane Bingel Adaptations
5/20		OPEN	OPEN	Eleanor Stanley	Ray Parker Rope	OPEN
5/26	Jim Crabb	OPEN	Mary Garrett	Joyce Sens	Frank Sens Rope	Ruby Dilgren Arachnids
5/27		OPEN	OPEN	Paula Thorson	OPEN	Chris Battan Birds

(Continued from page 6) Armand Bayou Forest

canopy are found such common plants as yaupon holly, American beautyberry and vines of several types.

The forests of the nature center are not untouched by the hand of man. Farming families, which began occupying this land during the last century, ran their livestock in the forest. The animals grazed the seedling trees and the smaller plants resulting in a forest, which today is made up of large, older trees and very young trees with few of intermediate age. It may also have decreased the plant **diversity** or numbers of plants found in the forest.

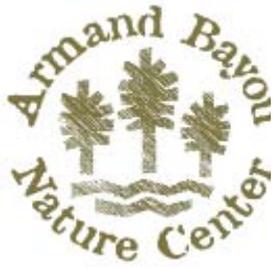
Another consequence of man's influence has been the introduction of foreign plants such as Chinese tallow and Chinese privet.

Bayou Foliage

These grow very quickly and encroach into the forest, especially where a veteran tree has fallen and sunlight can reach the forest floor.

Both of these human influences have affected the process of succession in the forest. **Succession** is the orderly process of wildlife community change with one set of plants and animals giving way to another over time until a state of equilibrium or balance is reached.



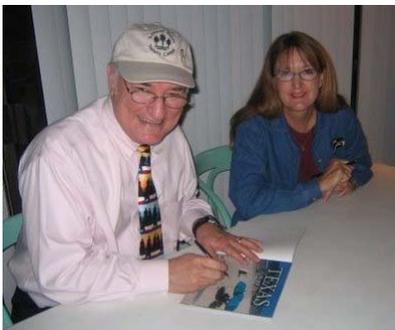


Armand Bayou Nature Center Volunteers

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www.abnc.org

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www.abncvols.org



April Happenings

Gary and Kathy Adams
Clark, our speakers at
the April 12 volunteer
meeting



George Regmund, Ann
Brinly and Bob Paxton after
retrieving a refrigerator
and large pipe from Ar-
mand Bayou. They loaded
them aboard the nature
center skiff and Ann acted
as ballast for the pipe.



Students from Whitcomb Elementary participating in Hands on History activities with Jane Bingel and Ray Parker. Dwanna Norris and Theresa Gibbard also worked with the students that day.



Earth Day early
morning birdwalk
led by George
Regmund



Chris LaChance teaching
a continuing education
WaterSmart class



Check out the May issue
of Southern Living for an
article on Chris.