



BRAZOS BEND BUNCH BUGLE

VOLUME 25, NUMBER 5

MAY 2013

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

ALLIGATORS IN THE SUBURBS!



According to the 6 o'clock evening news on KPRC Channel 2, the rascally reptiles have been visiting some of the nearby neighborhoods. On Thursday, May 30, 2013, a news film crew visited Brazos Bend State Park and interviewed our own David Heinicke on the issue of the alligators 'on the loose'. He assured the viewers that this behavior is normal for this time of the year,

especially after having a cool spring season. He informed the public that people need to leave the alligators alone and not to feed them. The news clip included several pictures of alligators of all sizes walking around on land, as well as swimming in the water at the park.

It's nice having some late spring season publicity to advertise our wonderful and beautiful "Home of the American Alligator"!

Mary Lockwood

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LOSS OF A VOLUNTEER

Candace Kanak

passed away after suffering a severe stroke. Her family would like to set up a memorial fund in her name through the BBSPVO. If you would like to contribute send to:

BBSPVO
c/o Candace Kanak Memorial Fund
21901 FM 762
Needville, TX 77461

Our heartfelt sympathy goes to husband and volunteer Tom Kanak and the rest of her family.

Our sincere sympathy to

Justin Rhodes

on the death of his father on June 2.

Our thoughts and prayers are with Justin and his family.

APRIL MEETING NOTES

submitted by Anna Dell Williamson

President Mary Lockwood called the April 13, 2013, meeting to order. There were 16 volunteers, 2 staff, 1 VIT, and 1 visitor present. Mary thanked Joe Southern, Nelda Gay, Mary Lockwood and Nancy Lynn Jones for the supper. The March minutes were approved as posted.

Reports:

Bob Kowalewski brought the Treasurer's Report. March was a very good month, with good wood sales, donations for purchase of a tractor, and the best March ever in the Gift shop. Bob went over the major expenses for March, which included work on the gator shed, sign shop, hog traps, lake restoration, computer software for the Gift Shop, annual fee for QuickBooks, patches for members, and a new canopy for outreach.

The following purchase requests were presented and approved:

- Coarse river sand to backfill water and sewer lines after repairs are made from leaks; from the Park Supervisor funds.
- 70 tons of $\frac{3}{4}$ inch to dust limestone to treat trails for potholes and low spots; from Trail Materials funds.
- Replenish lumber to build benches; from memorial fund for Brian Nelson bench.
- Scaffolding system for accessing high places – pavilions, NC, restrooms, shelter roof gables, etc., to provide safe access to high structures in park; from Park Maintenance Fund or Tools and Equipment fund.
- 2 Vertex portable radios, from Superintendent's fund.

Beth Debenport brought the Gift Shop report. We had an outstanding March. Plush animals were a big seller. Thanks for the help in March. It took a lot of people helping to stay open every day of Spring Break and over Easter weekend.

Comptroller Nancy Lynn Jones reported that we received a check to BBSPVO in appreciation of Rich Dashnau for his alligator presentation.

Pete Hart reported on Maintenance: We received material for hog traps, which are being constructed. We relocated 12 pigs. The new tractor is in, and TPWD Austin has approved it to be in our new gator building. It is already being used to haul stone for redoing horseshoe trail. The crew put a new base on the wood yard to help control flooding. Wood supply and profits are up.

Chuck Duplant reported that we have an 83% return on wood sales, and only lost 1 3/4 cords.

Diane Carpenter reported that there is a NC donation box in the Gift Shop, on the back of the cash register. Many customers tell us to keep the change. We use that money to make change during the day and put a nice sum in the Nature Center box every day.

Anna Dell Williamson reported that Joe Southern and Nelda Gay will be helping with the newsletter. Joe will be an assistant editor and compile a couple of issues each year. Nelda will help with the article editing.

Anna Dell also expressed appreciation for the help from the volunteers to train the VITs.

Anna Dell presented the revised Bylaws and SOPs. The changes were accepted and the new documents become effective immediately. They will be posted on the web site in the Members' section.

Chuck Duplant announced that the Summer Blood Drive will be July 13. We need volunteers to preregister to definitely give blood. The registration deadline is in 4 weeks.

Joe Southern asked what is being done to repair Creekfield Accessible Trail. There are several major problems.

We received thank you notes from **Veronika Vaneckova** for the baby gift.

MAY MEETING NOTES

President Mary Lockwood called the May 11 General Meeting to order. There were 15 volunteers and 4 staff members attending. Mary thanked **Offie** and **Judy Walker, Woody Scott, Judy Strauss, Cindy Peterson,** and **Mary Lockwood** for bringing items for the supper. The April minutes were approved as posted.

Treasurer Bob Kowalewski brought the April financial report. The following requests for purchase were presented and approved:

1. **Barbara Keller-Willy:** Funding for plants to create a Monarch Butterfly Waystation to be located in the flower beds around the Nature Center, Cistern and Wildmill. The area will be reworked to include a minimum of 10 milkweed plants per 100 square feet of. Some work has already been done. Monarchwatch.org certifies way stations, based on the number of milkweed plants per square foot of area and the provision of certain nectar plants for Monarchs. "Butterflies of Ft. Bend" from the Master Naturalist group will add host plants for 24 species of butterflies common to our area. Labor will be provided by Girl Scouts, 10 - 12 years old, as their Bronze Project on May 19. Protective garden edging will be installed to protect the wood and metal of the windmill and water trough. The area will be filled with soil for the plants. plant without digging. 52 bags of potting soil. By windmill, and along flower beds in back, replenish nectar plants, GS coming out to complete project May 19. They will purchase sign for the way-station area. Funding will come from the Sugarland Garden Club account, grant money from Carol Ramsayer, and BBSPVO.
2. **Chuck Duplant:** Funding to translate TPWD drawings of the BBEEC into interactive graphics for the purpose of presentations to Regional Director Justin Rhodes, TPWD, TPW Foundation and potential corporate donors. The presentation to Justin Rhodes will be June 7, then the presentation to TPWD, and the formal presentation to TPW Foundation. We have architectural drawings, but we are looking

for something more interactive for fund-raising presentations. We have bids for drawings, including an interactive walkthrough, showing both historical usage and future usage, with a ten-year projection of population growth and increase in visitation.

3. **Maintenance:** Replenish bench materials for Stade Memorial Bench, including sheathing, nuts, bolts, weathershield, etc.

Bob reminded us that this is his last year as Treasurer, due to term limits. He invited volunteers interested in the position to talk to him about duties and responsibilities.

Comptroller Nancy Lynn Jones read two letters to the group, one from Eileen Stade, with a donation for a bench in memory of husband Richard; and another to Judy Strauss and Woody Scott, with a donation to the Outreach fund in gratitude for their participation in GGG Sustainability Earth Day.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Gift Shop: Beth Debenport that we had a good April and appreciate all the help from the membership in the Gift Shop.

Maintenance: Pete Hart thanked the organization for the equipment, like the new tractor (which is doing fine), chain saws, splitter, and so forth. The Maintenance Crew is happy with this needed equipment to get their job done.

Training: Anna Dell Williamson reminded the membership that the application deadline for the next training session in September is June 30.

Eco-Explorers: The popular summer program is full.

Outreach: Judy Strauss reported that April was a very busy month. She thanked Jacob Dement, Steve Killian, and Richard Taylor for arranging for her to have a park truck to use for Outreach activities. She reported on recent activities:

April 29, Sweeney Pride Day, 646 visitors

March 23, Children's Festival in Richmond, Nelda Gay and Jerry Carpenter, in 673 visitors.

March 30, Katy Folk Fest, 1723 visitors

April 6, Rosenberg Railroad Museum.

April 17-19, Green Grove Group of Houston, with events occurring in Fulshear, Richmond, and League City on consecutive evenings, and resulted in the first donation that has been given for Outreach.

May 18 will be Keep Sugarland Green.

April 29, Sweeney Pride Day, 646, better than last year, resurfaced area, better place,

Thanks to **Woody Scott** for a PowerPoint presentation of pictures. Sharon donated her old laptop to use for this. Other events include benefits for kids with problems. For Outreach, we take animals, talk about them and the park. Our main purpose is to help out groups. More events are coming up, but things are starting to slow down a bit now.

Announcements:

Barbara Keller-Willy reported that a day in July, possibly the second weekend, will be designated as a "Weather Day". TV Weatherman Frank Billingsly may come out.

STAFF REPORTS, APRIL AND MAY



SHARON HANZIK, Interpretive Ranger and Volunteer Coordinator

APRIL MEETING REPORT

- We still need help with school groups in April and May. Check the Special Events Schedule.
 - We also need two volunteers in the Nature Center for the 11-1 shift weekdays to assist groups that come on their own.
 - We are giving the Volunteer Management System a try.
 - We have been requested to present some summer library programs. Sign up on the special events calendar if you are available.
- The Eco-Explorers summer camp information is on web and on Facebook, and there are flyers in the Nature Center.
 - Make sure you are giving the right information while interpreting in park. Read and know the facts. We will continue every month to keep volunteers up to speed on the facts they need for accurate interpretation. Handling wild animals is a teaching opportunity, not just a touching opportunity for the visitor.
 - Thanks for all your help.

MAY MEETING REPORT

- There are no major changes coming up. We are busy with school groups, and will have busy weekends through Memorial Day, with more activities coming up in June.
- The Eco-Explorers program is full.
- We are accepting volunteer applications through June 30. We are using our old application form through the BBSP website. We are informing the public about it through several media. We have had one interview, so far.
- Report your hours to Sharon using the spreadsheet we have been using for a couple of years.



JACOB DEMENT, Acting Superintendent

APRIL MEETING REPORT

- ▶ This was the best March ever, a record-breaking March. 2013 beat March 2012 by 30%.
 - ▶ Staff and volunteers are preparing the park for Easter, keeping litter picked up, continues to grow.
 - ▶ Steve Killian has been extended until July at Enchanted Rock.
- ▶ Americorps is coming again this year for trail maintenance, may do some Nature Center programs. They will stay in the Dining Hall while here.
 - ▶ There were lots of law enforcement contacts in March – mostly speeding. There were no significant problems over Easter.
 - ▶ Headquarters is trying to let drivers know when 2 lanes are open for check-in.
 - ▶ The Park store did almost double over last March.
 - ▶ Park attendance was 20,000 in March Fiscal Year 2013, and 10,000 in FY 2012. There was lots of help from volunteers, hosts, and staff.
 - ▶ Wood sales were good, and rangers had to restock last night.
 - ▶ Thanks for everything.

MAY MEETING REPORT

- ✓ It was a good April, but not the best ever. However, it ended well.
- ✓ Staff laid limestone on the far end of Live Oak trail, Horseshoe, and patched areas from the Observation Tower toward the Spillway.
- ✓ Ducks Unlimited will begin new construction near the end of May to install a new water control system on the other side of Elm Lake. The project will take about a month to complete, and will allow us to

control the water level in the area behind Pilant Slough.

- ✓ The Texas Department of Criminal Justice group has put in 558 work hours, labor. We have purchased a new TDCJ van, which will transport 15 passengers and free up the current van for park and volunteers. This new van doubles the amount of crew we can bring out.
- ✓ The new Weather Station is installed, up and running, and posting current weather. Weather-Wunderground has BBSP as part of its system, and we are able to check real time on weather from our web site.
- ✓ New radios came in for staff, had to be sent back to reprogram.
- ✓ Steve should start back here June 1.

Thanks to the volunteers for keeping things running smoothly.

CHUCK HUBBARD, Management Trainee

MAY MEETING REPORT

- ❑ Americorps and CCC team, volunteers who come out to provide physical labor, will build a trail 3.38 mile long from Live Oak through an unused portion of the park to tie in to Creekfield Lake trail. They will begin May 22, and live in the Dining Hall while they are here.
- ❑ We will have a Summer Intern for about 12 weeks. This unpaid position offered through various educational programs will help satisfy credit requirements for a college degree. The intern will stay in an RV in the park starting in June.



DAVID HEINICKE, Interpretive Ranger, Park Law Officer

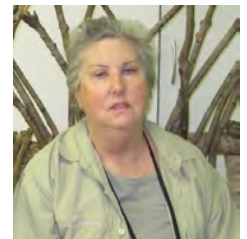
MAY MEETING REPORT

- ▶ June 1 is National Trails Day. The expanded list of programs and hikes will be posted on the web site. A press release is coming out soon. Special hikes will include an alligator hike, a bird hike, and a Hoot's Hollow hike.
- ▶ A composting toilet will be installed at the equestrian area, which may be an improvement.
- ▶ We are working on a trail grant to resurface North and South ends of Creekfield Lake trail with concrete.
- ▶ The Nature Center roof has been leaking for many years. We are working on getting that repaired. At this time the bids are too high.
- ▶ TPWD has adopted a new policy about using and displaying wild animals, based on the policy we wrote and have in place at BBSP. It involves more paperwork to document what we have, where we got it, and how it was paid for. New training may be required.
- ▶ We looked at some plans for the new BBEEC. We will be taking a presentation to Justin Rhodes, Regional Director. He will then go to TPWD to get approval, and we will go to the Texas Parks and Wildlife Foundation, which helps raise money for TPWD projects and activities. After we get approval from Justin, we will get an artist's rendering of the building to begin our fund-raising efforts. We will need everyone's support to have a successful building campaign.



CONGRATULATIONS!

Congratulations to **Rae Bassett** on being the first from the February class to complete training!



Congratulations to volunteer **Tori Matta**, who was named Valedictorian of George Ranch High School.



New volunteer is born! **Jennifer Louise Kroupa** was born at 9:09 AM on April 21, measuring 20.5 inches and weighing 6 lbs 13 oz. Proud parents VIT Veronika Vaneckova and Martin Kroupa are doing fine.

JUNE BIRTHDAYS

Kent Fewell
Zachary Guess
Peter Guzman
Linda Keltner
Glen Kilgore
Michael Sanderson
Rebecca Sykes
Veronika Vaneckova (VIT)
Anna Dell Williamson



JULY BIRTHDAYS

Debra Baker
Diane Carpenter
Jo Ann Davis
Jacob Dement (Staff)
Jaci Elliott
Susie Taylor (Staff)
Barb Tucker



JUNE ANNIVERSARIES

Joe and Sue Carmichael (1953) (Emeritus)
Linda and Don Keltner

APRIL MAINTENANCE REPORT

Volunteers on the Maintenance Crew and Trail Trimming Crew donated 214.5 hours in April on the following activities:

Wood Yard:

Split and bundled wood
Completed floor in new Gator shed

Trail Trimming and Trail Maintenance:

Loaded and delivered trail material for Horseshoe Lake trail
Trimmed trail by shelters and the wood yard
Cleaned up debris from blown down tree

Pest Control:

Set and checked hog traps
Treated Chinese Tallow trees



Blooming Rattlesnake Master on the pocket prairie by the Observatory

SUMMER BLOOD DRIVE

Our next blood drive is scheduled for Saturday, July 13, 9 a.m. – 3 p.m.
Come out and donate blood to help others. No appointment necessary.

NATURE CENTER REPORT APRIL 2013

Below are the totals of the various activities and attendance recorded for the Nature Center, hikes, and programs for April 1-30, 2013. We presented 45 programs and hikes.

PROGRAMS	TOTALS APRIL								
NATURE CENTER ATTENDANCE Apr. 2013 - 7,523 Apr. 2012 - 9,994 Apr. 2011 - 9,206 Apr. 2010 - 8,300 Apr. 2009 - 5,739 Apr. 2008 - 6,387 Apr. 2007 - 7,399 Apr. 2006 - 7,168 Apr. 2005 - 7,027	<table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%;">Saturdays (4) - 3,233 High, 1,038 (4/20) Average: 808</td> <td style="width: 50%;"></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Sundays (4) - 2,098 High, 662 (4/21) Average: 525</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Weekdays (22) - 2,192 High, 240 (4/16) Average: 100</td> <td></td> </tr> </table>	Saturdays (4) - 3,233 High, 1,038 (4/20) Average: 808		Sundays (4) - 2,098 High, 662 (4/21) Average: 525		Weekdays (22) - 2,192 High, 240 (4/16) Average: 100			
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Weekdays (22) - 2,192 High, 240 (4/16) Average: 100									
CREEKFIELD HIKES (9)	215, Average: 24								
SNAKE PROGRAM(4)	186, Average: 47								
CHILDREN'S STORY TIME (2)	42, Average: 21								
ALLIGATOR PROGRAMS(5)	86, Average: 17								
BIRD HIKES (4)	65, Average: 16								
OUTREACH(9)	3,257, Average: 362								
WILDLIFE VIEWING (4)	64, Average: 16								
POND LIFE (2)	29, Average: 15								
OTHER PROGRAMS (6): Owls, Photo Hike, Geocaching (3), Leaf Rubbing	121								
TOTAL VISITORS SERVED IN HIKES AND PROGRAMS	4,065								
VOLUNTEER HOURS	<table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%;">Interpretation =</td> <td style="width: 50%;">1571</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Maintenance/</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Other =</td> <td>479</td> </tr> <tr> <td>TOTAL =</td> <td>2050</td> </tr> </table>	Interpretation =	1571	Maintenance/		Other =	479	TOTAL =	2050
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Maintenance/									
Other =	479								
TOTAL =	2050								
PARK ATTENDANCE (Percentage reflects the percentage of total visitors in each category.)	<table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%;">Total</td> <td style="width: 50%;">23,262</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Day use (81%)</td> <td>18,755</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Overnight (19%)</td> <td>4,507</td> </tr> <tr> <td>NC (32%)</td> <td>7,523</td> </tr> </table>	Total	23,262	Day use (81%)	18,755	Overnight (19%)	4,507	NC (32%)	7,523
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Day use (81%)	18,755								
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NC (32%)	7,523								

NC COMMENT CARDS

"Diane was awesome with our large group of girl scouts." *(Note: Both Dianes do a great job, so kudos to you both!)*

5/19 - "We had the Creekfield Lake Nature Trail hike, the guide was very good. He handled a group of boy scouts very good. Thank you." *(Mike Fisher led on this day.)*

"Helpful volunteers; very friendly."

"Wonderful park, great programs, friendly staff/volunteers; we will definitely be back."

"Awesome facilities"

"Great landscapes, fascinating wildlife, very friendly park rangers"

"Close by and great for kids; we love trees and picnic areas"

"Enjoyed a program on American alligator by Noriko - she was very interesting to listen to - good presentation."

"Great learning experience for us and our children"

THANK YOU

- 😊 to Beth Debenport for keeping up with restocking volunteer comfort supplies including eating utensils, plates napkins, cups and tea. Beth has consistently taken care of this need for the longest time.
- 😊 to Eileen Stade, for her generous donation for a bench in memory of her late husband, Richard Stade. She has asked it to be placed on the east side of 40-Acre Lake, as that is where he took a majority of his bird photographs. They can be viewed on his website <http://rstade.smugmug.com/>.
- 😊 to all volunteers for your help this spring - it was a busy, busy season and we could not have possibly pulled it off without you!
- 😊 to those who chose to spend some of their Memorial Day weekend serving park visitors.
- 😊 to those who helped serve area school children from March to May.
- 😊 to those who made regular weekend and weekday commitments.
- 😊 to Green Grove Group of Houston for outreach donation
- 😊 to Girl Scouts of Troop 27119; Kalen Jacobson, Troop Leader; parents Johanna Hankins, TuAnh Tadang, and Guillermo "Bill" Jacobson; and volunteers Barbara Keller-Willy and Chuck Duplant for their work in creating the Monarch Butterfly Waystation.
- 😊 to Sugar Land Garden Club for their donation to Brazos Bend State Park to preserve life and beauty in the park. Funds helped the Girl Scout Troop 27119 to build the Monarch Butterfly Waystation.
- 😊 to Diane Welty, Tom Prentiss, Jerry Carpenter, Suzie Gann, Anna Dell Williamson, Nancy Dobbs, Rebecca Sykes, Carrie Sample, Woody Scott and Nelda Gay for leading school hikes. We would not be able to accept larger groups if not for your assistance. You are very much appreciated!!!
- 😊 to the volunteers for making National Trails Day happen. We had a manageable turnout.
- 😊 to Pete Hart for donating a new couch for the Nature Center lounge. And thank you to the Tuesday work crew for making the switch. The old one truly did go "out the window"!



THANKS DAVE!

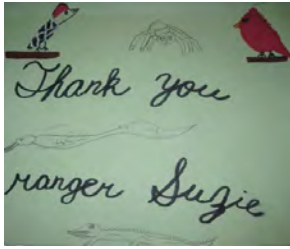
by Sharon Hanzik

Congratulations to Dave Armstrong on his achievement of Emeritus Status within the BBSPVO! This year marks Dave's fifth year of service and those five years have been filled with various volunteer activities. Dave immediately found a niche working Wednesdays in the Nature Center. He soon became involved with leading school group hikes and presenting various outreach programs for a wide variety of institutions. Dave served in office for two consecutive years as the Treasurer of the BBSPVO. He was also instrumental in developing the goals and initiatives of the committees involved in preparations to design and build the park's new environmental education center.

Dave has moved on now but hopes that he will be able to visit and still participate in volunteering. Dave and Gay have relocated to the Georgetown area to be closer to family. Dave is already missed, and we hope to see him again soon!

A SPECIAL THANK YOU

Ed. Note: Recently, I found a bumper sticker that says: "I love this job so much that I'd do it for nothing. (Unfortunately, they know that.)" Well, that's what volunteers do, and we wouldn't do it if we didn't enjoy it. But sometimes we get "paid" in unexpected ways that really warm our hearts. Recently volunteers Suzie Gann and Tom Prentiss, and Park Naturalist Sharon Hanzik led a school group hike for Duchesne Academy. The teacher sent each hike leader a folder of original drawings from the children, with notes about the highlight of their experience at BBSP. (The original spelling has been kept in the students' comments.)



Mackerie: THANK YOU Mrs. Susie. Thank you for helping me find my bird, the Pied-Billed Grebe!

Annie: My favorite part of the Brazos Bend State Park was when Ranger Susie showed us all of the birds.

Catherine: My favorite thing that I saw was the swamp and Range Susie told us what everything in it was.

Lawiel: My favorite thing about the Brazos Bend field trip is seeing pretty birds and counting Alligators.

Mrs. Suzie was my tour guide and she showed us Alligators. We counted 20. My favorite thing about Brazos Bend State Park is the Alligators, and the view. She was a great tour guide.

My favorite thing about Brazos Bend was the Alligators because I have not seen one before.

Thank you ranger Suzie!



Brynn: My favorite part about our field trip is when Ranger TOM told us the Indian legend. About the Indian girl and the Spanish Moss.

My favorite thing about the Brazos Bend field trip was seeing my bird, the Great Egret, and petting and seeing alligators.

The most interesting thing I learned from Ranger Tom is the Indian legend about the Spanish moss.

Sophie Anna: The most interesting thing I learned from Ranger Tom is that the American Coot and the Common Murre were cousins.

My favorite thing about Brazos Bend State park was: climbing the little tower and going to the top. *(The drawing even showed the water station at the foot of the tower.)*

Isabella: My favorite part with Ranger Tom was when we saw a White Ibis eat its food.

Lorena: My favorite thing I learned with Ranger Tom was when he taught us about how Spanish Moss was made.

My favorite thing about Brazos Bend is I saw 20 alligators.

Charly: Thank you! Tom.

Echo: Tom, you're a good park ranger. I learned a lot from you. Thank you for letting us come.

The End!



Jasmine: My favorite thing about Brazos Bend State Park was when she showed us the baby alligators, birds, bugs and flowers. I think it was awesome! I love you Ranger Sharon!

My favorite thing at Brazos Bend was seeing the alligator baby.

My favorite thing about the Brazos Bend Field trip was the alligators.

My favorite thing about Brazos Bend state park was seeing the alligators. I saw a baby alligator with stripes!

Ava: Dear Sharon, Thank you for helping me find my bird.

Mekala: Thanks so much Ranger Sharon! My favorite thing I saw is the alligators!

Anita: Dear Sharon, thank you for having us. It was a lot of fun. I hope I can come again. The alligators were very cool. Your Friend

Maddie: Dear Sharon, Thank you for telling me there was a different name for the buttercups. Love

MONARCH BUTTERFLY WAYSTATION



Ten girls from Girl Scout Troop 27119 each completed 20 hours of work recently to achieve their Bronze Girl Scout Awards by helping to design and plant a Monarch Butterfly Waystation. Under the guidance of Kalen Jacobson, Troop Leader, the girls raised money to buy three trellises, moisture control soil, and a variety of mature plants. The remainder of the plants and T-shaped stakes for caterpillars to use for their chrysalises were purchased with the Sugar Land Garden Club donation to Brazos Bend State Park. In addition, the girls will add signs to be placed at the garden, and the volunteer organization will provide signage for individual groups of plants, as well as the Monarch life cycle to show visitors the goal of the garden.

This project will be featured in the Girl Scout Association regionally, as well as to all the BBSP visitors, and the girls will apply for National Certification of the Waystation. Parents helping the girls were Johanna Hankins, TuAnh Tadang, and Guillermo "Bill" Jacobson. Volunteers Barbara Keller-Willy and Chuck Duplant helped the girls with preparing the soil behind the Nature Center and in the windmill area.

We extend our "thank you" to the Girl Scouts, their leaders and helpers, and the Sugar Land Garden Club for their contributions to the preservation of life and beauty in the park.

As a followup to this project, the GS leader, Kalen Jacobson, write Barbara the following:

"Hi Barbara! You will be excited to hear, as I was, that over 1000 children in the Houston area have already heard about our Monarch Waystation at Brazos Bend! Warriors of the Wild has been telling the audiences about our project during their presentations at local schools over the past 1 ½ weeks! (Warriors of the Wild is a college-aged group that entertains youth and teaches about nature.) This was totally their idea, as a way to demonstrate to kids that they CAN make a difference in making the world a better place. They're being asked by the kids just how to create a monarch waystation, so they're going to need to make handouts with more information."



NATIONAL TRAILS DAY

JUNE 1, 2013

National Trails Day was celebrated at BBSP with many activities planned for visitors. Special hikes included Birds, Butterflies & Dragonflies Hike starting at Hale Lake; an Alligator Hike at 40-Acre Lake; Gorgeous Gorge Hike of the Big Creek Gorge, an 80 to 100 foot deep channel carved out by Big Creek on its way to the Brazos River during the 1991 flood; the Creekfield Nature Hike; an 8-mile bike ride along the Brazos River to the Yellowstone landing trail and back; a Prairie Hike, "Where the Buffalo Roam", including the history and characters who played a part in prairie demise, as well as a chance to see some of the animals that once roamed the prairie; a Hoot's Hollow Hike through the forest and past some of the park's largest trees; and a Photography Hike. Other activities included some of our regular programs: Geocaching 101, Children's Story Time and Craft, and The Wonderful Lives of Snakes.

The Stafford Municipal Television Network filmed several programs for a story that they are doing on National Trails Day. We had 180 visitors attending the various NTD programs.

NEW VOLUNTEER TRAINING INFORMATION

by Sharon Hanzik

We are accepting applications through our website until June 30th. Please help recruit for your organization. If you can distribute brochures anywhere offsite, we have plenty! Remember that anyone between the ages of 8 and 13 needs to have an adult train with them.

Here are excerpts from the media material that has been sent out:

Want to make a serious commitment to a whole lot of fun? Become a member of the Brazos Bend State Park Volunteer Organization (BBSPVO). Staff is accepting applications for the next round of training that will take place September 14, 21 and 28, 2013. All three dates are mandatory.

Park Staff is seeking outgoing, self-motivated individuals who are able to donate at least 48 hours per calendar year and are able to assist park visitors year round. Volunteers operate the park's nature center and volunteer gift shop. They conduct programs and hikes for the general public and school groups, maintain various customer services and assist the park maintenance staff with trail maintenance, etc. Volunteers receive hands-on training in all areas. Application, interview, liability waiver and criminal background check required. Application deadline is June 30, 2013.

Volunteer Rick Dashnau shares thoughts about his volunteer experiences: "When I signed up for volunteer training, I wasn't aware of what a park volunteer did. All I knew was that alligators lived in the park, and I might be able to do something constructive while "hanging out" with the alligators. I swiftly discovered that there are MANY tasks performed by volunteers at Brazos Bend State Park. A volunteer is only limited by their imagination.

"In the 10-plus years I've been volunteering at BBSP, I've come to learn that one of our most important functions is to be "ambassadors" for the park. That is, volunteers are the human point of contact for most visitors at the park. Although the park staff and camp hosts are on duty, their tasks often keep them out of public contact. So it is the volunteers who spend the most time talking to the visitors on the trails and in the Nature Center. It isn't a hard task. After all, just about everyone who visits the park is here because they want to be.

"We have many out-of-state and out-of-country visitors. Some are temporary or permanent transplants while others are simply vacationing. Upon finding out that it is someone's first visit to the park, I immediately welcome them to the park, and try to find something to show them. It's even better if the visitor is new to Texas, or the United States!! I saying "Welcome to Texas!" and "Welcome to our park!". If we can share something unique to our park--whether it's standing on a trail while alligators are bellowing around us, watching a River Otter swimming by, seeing any of our 300 species of birds or talking about our animals in the Nature Center--then the day has been well-spent. Few things are as satisfying as having a visitor that I'd met on the trail come up to me later in the day and thank me for being at the park--often sharing what they had noticed after we'd spoken."

The BBSPVO has been serving park visitors for almost 25 years and has been recognized by the Texas Parks & Wildlife Department, the Texas State Senate and House of Representatives as an exemplary organization that consistently donates an average of 20,000 hours annually. The Organization also donates a substantial amount of funding that is used to directly assist the park with operational, educational and customer service needs. The majority of this funding is provided by their gift shop sales but also comes from private donations. The BBSPVO is a 501, (C), (3) non-profit organization.

Applications are also accepted for maintenance work only. (One may start volunteering immediately after the criminal background check clears and liability waiver is signed.)

Complete training information and application can be found at www.brazosbend.org. You may also contact BBSPVO Volunteer Coordinator Sharon Hanzik at 979-553-5123.

OUTREACH REPORT

by Judy Strauss

Since our last report, Woody and I have been very busy with Outreach Programs. Here's a recap of our activities.

On March 23, we attended the "Children's Festival" at the Fort Bend Museum. Our thanks go to Jerry Carpenter and Nelda Gay for being there to help us with 673 visitors to our booth. The Fort Bend Museum furnished a very nice lunch to us free of charge.

The following Saturday, May 6, Woody and I traveled to Katy for the Katy Folk Festival, a huge event with many vendors and a steady flow of visitors through the afternoon. Our final count of visitors was about 1,723. Chick-fil-A furnished a delicious meal to volunteers, free of charge.

We had our booth on the following Saturday, May 13, at the Rosenberg Railroad Museum in Rosenberg for their "Railfest 2013," celebrating 160 years of railroading in Fort Bend County. There were lots of activities for all, including a train ride on the "Trackless Train," the "Hobo Jungle of the 1930s," and games galore with prizes, food, and entertainment by the Brazos Pickers and other local talent. With 1,106 recorded visitors, our thanks go to volunteer Riley Teague, VIT Kayla Scott, and former volunteer Tyler Teague for helping us with this event for the entire time. We could not have done as well without their help! We all not only enjoyed a free breakfast and lunch donated by the Museum, but we were also given free Volunteer tee shirts for our support.

The following week, we had an outreach at the Cross Creek Ranch in Fulshear on Wednesday evening, April 17; at Long Meadows Farms in Richmond on Thursday; and at Tuscon Lakes in League City on Friday evening. All three of these events were sponsored by the Green Grove Group of Houston. Although our total number of the three events was under 400, we reached a large group of visitors who were not aware of BBSP because most of them had moved into the Houston area within the past two years. We were able to educate them on the many questions they had about alligators and other wildlife that they had encountered since they moved to our areas.

We also introduced a new prop, a digital picture frame with different photos taken at BBSP, for which I really want to thank my partner, Woody, for putting together. This has really made a big difference in our display and draws attention to our booth (as if the snakes & alligators didn't!).

On Saturday, April 29, we did another new event in Sugar Land for the "Keep Sugar Land Beautiful" celebration in Towne Square. This was quite different from most of our events, but very interesting, with visitors from a diversity of ethnic groups stopping by our display.

On May 4, Woody and I were in Sweeny, Texas, for the "Sweeny Pride Day" celebration. The park where the event takes place has been completely renovated, and we had a wonderful spot for our booth where we talked to many visitors, some who had already been visitors to BBSP and others who seemed very interested in visiting for the first time. There were inquiries about our Volunteer Organization, our park, and, of course, the alligators.

Our events are always listed on the Special Events Calendar, and, we would really appreciate any help we can get, especially for the larger events. If you can add your name to a slot of time, your help would really be welcome. If you have any questions, please feel free to call and leave a message on my cell phone, 281-389-8617.

Thank you for everyone's support in the BBSPVO Outreach Program.

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

Carter Smith, Executive Director, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department sent an email to his staff regarding the results of the Legislative Session that has just finished. Below are some of the items that came out of that session. The entire email has been sent to the membership, so you can find more detail there.

Dear Colleagues:

As I think most of you know, the 83rd Legislative Session came to a close on Monday afternoon (May 27). The 83rd Regular Session is now officially history, and there are key outcomes from the Session that I want to share with you.

Let me start off by emphasizing that our Intergovernmental Affairs team led by Harold Stone and supported by Lacie Petersen, Gene McCarty, and David Sinclair did a masterful job representing the agency. Their professionalism, commitment, ingenuity, and dedication were a major reason that the agency fared as well as it did, and I am eternally grateful for their leadership. I would be terribly remiss if I did not also thank our Commissioners, led by Chairman Dan Friedkin and Vice Chairman Ralph Duggins. Please know that all of our Commissioners were accessible, engaged and very focused on addressing the most critical needs of the agency during the session.

In addition, we were supported by myriad partners, both individuals and organizations, who labored long and hard to support our diverse needs and programs from state parks to fish and wildlife conservation to local park grants to law enforcement to critical recovery needs at Bastrop. As you all know, this agency is blessed to have many friends, and they were there for long days and long nights to help advance the important work of the Department. Quite simply, we couldn't do it without them.

So, what actually transpired? Let's start with a recap of TPWD's Legislative Appropriations Request (LAR), which included a base budget request of \$507 million and a request for additional funding totaling \$103 million in six exceptional items. In addition, we had two key emergency items that we needed additional funding to support - recovery efforts at Bastrop State Park and replacement of a helicopter that is absolutely essential to performing mission critical activities such as law enforcement surveillance, emergency response, and wildlife surveys.

On May 13th, the House-Senate conference committee approved the following TPWD exceptional item requests for additional funding, in two-year biennial amounts:

Item One	about \$18.9 million for state parks	close to \$17.9 million approved
Item Two	\$11.9 million to restore capital budget reductions	\$10.4 million approved
Item Three	\$40 million for capital repairs and construction	recommended funding \$8 million for Fund 9/fisheries and wildlife facility capital construction and \$11 million in bonds for repairs at any existing TPWD facility
Item Four	\$13 million to restore fish and wildlife funding	All approved
Item Five	\$15.5 million to restore funding for local park grants to cities and counties across Texas, as well as funding for the Community Outdoor Outreach Program	All approved
Item Six	\$3.7 million for state data center cost increases and Information Technology needs	a net total of about \$1 million (after adjusting for across the board data center reductions made elsewhere)

The 83rd Legislature also funded the following:

\$16 million in rider appropriations:

- Funding for a new agency helicopter
- New development at Fort Boggy State Park
- Master planning at Big Spring State Park.

HB 1025 provided the following:

- \$4.9MM for Bastrop State Park fire recovery
- \$5MM in additional capital construction repairs in state parks
- \$3MM in funding for the re-opening of the Cedar Bayou Fish Pass.

In summary, the 83rd session was a good one for TPWD, our partners, and the important conservation work we do for Texas and for Texans. Our major priorities were funded either in full or in part. Emergency items were addressed. Important legislation was passed. We enjoyed consistent and unwavering support from the Legislative leadership who worked very closely with us throughout the session to address our highest needs. We owe them a large debt of gratitude for their accessibility and their support, which in no small part was a direct outgrowth of their appreciation for the critical work you all do each and every day for our lands, waters, fish, wildlife, and parks.

I am proud to be a member of your team. Thank you.

Best,

Carter Smith, Executive Director, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department

TRAIL BUILDING AND MAINTENANCE

From Richard Taylor, Lead Ranger, 5/9/2013

LIVE OAK TRAIL AND LIMESTONE ON TRAILS

On May 9, we finished putting the limestone that the volunteers bought for us on the northeast end of Live Oak Trail where it stays wet all the time. We also put part of this limestone on undesignated Trail Grant Trail areas, such as the section of trail from the Observation Tower to the Spillway Bridge, where we filled in very low spots that hold water after rains.

For the most part, we packed down the limestone on Live Oak Trail, but if we get a good rain the trail is going to be real sloppy for a while. I recommend that we close Live Oak Trail for a few days after a rain so it can set up; otherwise, there will be a lot of unhappy people once they step off into the fresh limestone. Plus I would prefer not to have a bunch of ruts made by bicycle tires down the middle of it. We tried to keep it as narrow as possible, not to go any wider than it was in the original build of the trail.

The underlayment and limestone (Trail Grant Limestone) have been installed on Old Horseshoe Trail and this trail too will be sloppy for a while after a rain until the limestone sets up. New Horseshoe Trail limestone is down and has set up pretty hard. The trail was put down by hauling limestone in Gators and having TDCJ workers rake it out. The trail is a little bumpy, but JT is working on it when he can, to shape it up.

SAFETY NEWS

TPWD Safety Program Manual (Revised 10/2012)

The TPWD Safety Manual is required reading and compliance for all BBSPVO members. The manual is on the website in the Members section. Please read the manual as soon as possible and comply with all the mandates. In order to help you become acquainted with the Manual, the newsletter will contain a summary of various portions of the manual over the next few issues. This summary does not take place of reading the entire manual, but it will provide you with an overview and where to find items of special interest to you. You are personally responsible for finding out exactly what is in the manual regarding safety for staff, volunteers and others.

INJURY ILLNESS AND PREVENTION PROGRAM

An injury and illness prevention program is a proactive process to help employers find and fix workplace hazards before workers or volunteers are hurt. Effective injury and illness prevention programs emphasize top-level ownership of the program, participation by employees and volunteers, and a “find and fix” approach to workplace hazards.

JOB HAZARD ANALYSIS

Job-hazard analysis (prerequisite to a SOP) is a method of task analysis directed toward tasks that have high-risk procedures or could result in injury to avoid possible hazards.

STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES FOR HAZARD TASKS (SOPs)

Prerequisite to an SOP, hazardous tasks are typically those in which the employee must use hazardous materials or in which the equipment may cause serious injury if used improperly. The SOP identifies the activity and lists the procedures, requirements or steps to ensure the safety of the activity.

SAFETY INSPECTION PROGRAM

This program establishes the procedures for conducting safety inspections. It applies to all Texas Parks and Wildlife Department employees and volunteers at all locations. The primary purpose of an inspection is to identify existing and potential hazards and correct them before an accident occurs.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Supervisors and managers will continually observe their employees and volunteers and work areas for unsafe practices or conditions in assigned work areas, identify safety hazards or unsafe work practices which may be present, and implement immediate corrective action and follow-up. Volunteers will be responsible for immediately reporting any observed safety hazard to the volunteer supervisor or site manager.

INCIDENT REPORTING

All injuries to employees occurring during the employee's work are reported in the Incident Reporting System (IRS). Incidents that do not result in personal injury (potential injuries or near misses) should be investigated and reported in the IRS in the same way as if an injury had occurred.

SPRING AND SUMMER EVENTS

from Sharon Hanzik

THANK YOU TO ALL FOR YOUR HELP THIS SPRING - IT WAS A BUSY, BUSY SEASON and we could not have possibly pulled it off without you! You chose to spend some of their Memorial Day weekend serving park visitors, helped serve area school children from March to May and made regular weekend and weekday commitments.

BUT OF COURSE, IT'S NOT "OVER", IT JUST SLOWS DOWN A BIT. We still need consistent help throughout the summer months. In addition to helping in the nature center, gift shop, water station and leading Creekfield Hikes, we have some extra activities where volunteer help will be needed:

- June 11 kicks off the start of our annual Eco-Explorers day camps coordinated by Carrie Sample. If you would like to assist with the camps, sign-up opportunities are on the SPECIAL EVENTS calendar.
- There are also library outreach opportunities on the SPECIAL EVENTS calendar just waiting for a volunteer to sign up. Most are asking for a 1 hour program on snakes, alligators or both.
- Two summer groups are on the SPECIAL EVENTS calendar for June 12th and 19th and we need volunteer help with each.
- Annual Independence Bicycle Parade will be July 6th.
- Blood Drive on July 13th.

UPCOMING EVENTS

June 18	Tadpole classes, 9:30 AM - 11:00 AM Fulshear Library Outreach - 3:00 PM – 4:00 PM - <i>See Special Events Calendar</i>
June 20	Eco-Explorers 9:30 AM - 11:30 AM
June 25	Tadpole classes, 9:30 AM - 11:00 AM
June 27	Eco-Explorers 9:30 AM - 11:30 AM Freeport Library Outreach - 5:00 PM– 6:00 PM - <i>See Special Events Calendar</i>
July 6	Close-up photography Photo-walk, 5:00 PM, meet at Nature Center
July 9	Tadpole classes, 9:30 AM - 11:00 AM
July 11	Eco-Explorers 9:30 AM - 11:30 AM Freeport Library Outreach - 5:00 PM – 6:00 PM - <i>See Special Events Calendar</i>
July 13	Blood Drive, 10:00 AM to 2:00 PM, NC Parking Lot Budget and Executive Meetings, 3:00 PM Regular Business Meeting, 5:30 PM (Supper, 5:00 PM)
July 16	Tadpole classes, 9:30 AM - 11:00 AM
July 18	Eco-Explorers 9:30 AM - 11:30 AM
July 23	Tadpole classes, 9:30 AM - 11:00 AM
July 24	Cinco Ranch Library Outreach - 2:00 PM – 4:00 PM - <i>See Special Events Calendar</i>
July 25	Eco-Explorers 9:30 AM - 11:30 AM
July 27	Freeport Library Outreach - 3:00 PM – 4:00 PM - <i>See Special Events Calendar</i>
July 30	Tadpole classes, 9:30 AM - 11:00 AM
August 1	Eco-Explorers 9:30 AM - 11:30 AM
August 3	Bird photography Photo-walk, 5:00 PM, meet at Nature Center
August 10	Budget and Executive Meetings, 3:00 PM Regular Business Meeting, 5:30 PM (Supper, 5:00 PM)

Brazos Bend State Park

Texas Parks and Wildlife
21901 FM 762
Needville, TX 77461

☆☆☆☆☆☆

NEXT MEETING
SATURDAY, JULY 13, 2013
5:30 PM, NATURE CENTER

FIRST CLASS MAIL



REGULAR VOLUNTEER EVENTS

Creekfield Hikes	Every Saturday and Sunday at 10:00 AM, led by volunteers
Photo Hikes	First Saturday of each month
Volunteer meeting	Second Saturday of each month at 5:30 PM, supper at 5:00 PM
Bird Hikes	See schedule in calendar

BRAZOS BEND STATE PARK VOLUNTEER ORGANIZATION

VOLUNTEER ORGANIZATION OFFICERS

President:	Mary Lockwood
Vice-President:	Glen Kilgore
Secretary	Belinda DiMarcello
Treasurer:	Bob Kowalewski
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The **Brazos Bend Bunch Bugle** is the newsletter of the Brazos Bend State Park Volunteer Organization, A.K.A. The Brazos Bend Bunch. It is distributed monthly to volunteers through the BBSPVO web site. For further information on this newsletter or the volunteer program, contact David Heinicke or Sharon Hanzik at Brazos Bend State Park, phone 979-553-5101.

Opinions expressed in this newsletter are the opinions of the author of the article and do not necessarily reflect the official position of Brazos Bend State Park Volunteer Organization nor of BBSP administration. The deadline for Newsletter contributions is the Saturday following the monthly meeting, if mailed to Anna Dell Williamson, or at the meeting if delivered to the park. (E-mail address: <awilliamson4@comcast.net> or <newsletter@brazosbend.org>). Notify Anna Dell (281-485-2843) well in advance of any events you want announced in the newsletter.

**IN THE END, WE WILL CONSERVE ONLY WHAT WE LOVE,
WE WILL LOVE ONLY WHAT WE UNDERSTAND,
WE WILL UNDERSTAND ONLY WHAT WE ARE TAUGHT.**

**BABA DIOUM, SENEGAL
AFRICAN CONSERVATIONIST**