

## SUSTAINING GALVESTON BAY

by Page Williams

“What is Needed to Sustain Our Estuary?” was the theme of Galveston Bay Estuary Program’s ninth biennial State of the Bay Symposium, held at the Galveston Island Convention Center in mid-January. Houston Sierra sponsored my attendance at the two days of plenary and concurrent sessions designed to share information among resource managers, scientists, industry representatives, regulators, policy makers, and interested members of the public.

As always, the networking proved to be the most valuable part of the symposium for me. Plenary sessions, featuring too many speakers with not enough time, leave the audience with no chance to explore the issues in depth. Concurrent sessions always present a Hobson’s choice for me. Does one choose “Sustainable Conservation Practices” over “Managing

See **SUSTAINING** on Page 3

## MARCH GENERAL MEETING AFTER IKE: WHAT’S AHEAD FOR GALVESTON?

Ike should have been a threshold event in the deciding the future development of Galveston Island. Before Ike, certainly development interests were [pushing hard for ever-widening development of wetlands both ecologically valuable and vulnerable to flooding. The widespread destruction and cost to re-build would rationally indicate that old assumptions about acceptable development and acceptable risk of vulnerable, valuable wetlands needed re-evaluation.

But that re-evaluation is not assured.

Alice Anne O’Donell, the chairperson of Galveston Beach to Bay, Inc. (GBB) will speak about the very real threats to the integrity of the Galveston wetlands from unwise development.

She will share the program with Bill Broussard, one of GBB’s directors and chair of its legal committee. GBB was formed in 2007 as a grassroots group opposing unwise development on the West End by Marquette Co. Since then, threats to Galveston have grown to include the just-proposed dike intended to protect the island (particularly unwise development) from future hurricanes. And the cost? Billions.

The future development on Galveston is important to everyone who cares about the wetlands and wildlife on the Texas coast -- and Galveston is the closest piece of coast to Houston. Come hear what you need to know to protect our backyard wetlands.🌐



Before Ike  
After Ike  
U. S. Geological Survey photos

Balinese Room

### THE MONTHLY GENERAL MEETING WILL MOVE!

Both date and location will change beginning in April.  
See Page 7

## WHAT HAPPENED TO MY BANNER?

New postal regulations, new postal service equipment, cost, and the printer.

New postal regulations and cost of mailing forced us to change the position and size of the label area. Because new postal service equipment requires the fold on the bottom, the label had to be inverted. The new equipment does not handle newsprint well, so we had to change the paper. The sizes of paper stocked by the printer required that we change the size.

Some other format changes have been made. The Internet version will have some color. A symbol (currently one of several world maps) will indicate the end of a story.- Ed. 🌐

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Enter parking lot from Timmons or Richmond

**MARCH GENERAL MEETING  
AFTER IKE: WHAT’S AHEAD FOR GALVESTON**  
Thursday, March 5

Join us prior to the meeting for refreshments at the hospitality table and to visit the information tables for Forestry, Outings, and Inner City Outings. Find out how you can volunteer with us.

# TRIPS AND LOCAL OUTINGS

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## Car Camping

### VILLAGE CREEK STATE PARK

Feb 28 - March 1, 2009

Enjoy a late winter/early spring day hiking in the Piney Woods of East Texas. This area has been impacted by past hurricanes so now is an opportunity to observe how forests recover from storm damage. Possibly some of the dogwoods and Carolina jasmine will be blooming. We will camp overnight Saturday. Area attractions in the Lumberton area include units of the Big Thicket. In addition to the 3 dollar park entrance fee, camping fees will be divided by the number of participants but should be around 10 to 15 dollars. Contact Dale Stevens [dale\\_stevens9@yahoo.com](mailto:dale_stevens9@yahoo.com) or 832-764-2493. ☺

## Big Thicket

### BIG THICKET WEEKEND

February 28 - March 1, 2009

Enjoy the end of winter and beginning of spring by visiting Big Thicket National Preserve. On Saturday we will either visit the Big Sandy Creek Unit to reflag the Fulton Batisse Trail or hike the Beech Creek Unit. On Sunday we will visit the Lance Rosier Unit for a hike before heading for home. On Saturday evening we will have a great supper with lots of camaraderie at the home of Maxine Johnston in the heart of the Big Thicket in Batson, Texas. We spend the night at Maxine's house.

Come for one day or spend the entire weekend. Bring a daypack, water, lunch, hat, comfortable hiking shoes, and clothes to match the weather for the day. If you stay overnight bring what you need for the evening and a sleeping bag. Bring a little spending money. We may eat out or we may eat at Maxine's house.

The trip is limited to 15 people. If you want to go on the trip and or carpool to the location call Brandt Mannchen at 713-664-5962 or email him at [brandtshnfbt@juno.com](mailto:brandtshnfbt@juno.com) and leave your name, address, phone number, and email.

We will meet on February 28th (to carpool/caravan) at 7:30 am at Rice University, Entrance 13A, off of Greenbriar. Look for the blue Plymouth Neon. Be there at 7:30 am sharp because we need to get on our way quickly. In case of trip cancellation Brandt will either email or call you. ☺

## Hike

### FOUR NOTCH LOOP OF THE LSHT

Saturday, March 7, 2009

Hike the beautiful nine-mile Four Notch Loop on the Lone Star Hiking Trail (LSHT). The weather will still be cool and Spring will be in the air so this will be a great hike. See the wonderful White Oak hardwood forests as we cross Boswell and Briar Creeks and the tall pine tree dominated uplands.

Bring your day pack, water, lunch, hiking shoes, clothes to fit the weather, binoculars, cameras, and field guides. Hiking time should be about 6-7 hours.

We will meet at 8:00 am in the parking lot behind the International House of Pancakes (IHOP) at I-45 North and Greens Road. Look for the green Nissan Mini-van. To reach the parking lot, enter the feeder off I-45 North, via the Greens Road exit, and then pass through the traffic signal at Greens Rd. Turn right into the first strip center you come to (look for Brown Sugar's Barbecue)

### WILDERNESS FIRST AID CLASS

See Page 7.

and drive to the end of the strip center. The parking lot behind IHOP is on the right.

Contact Jane Prentiss at 713-201-5755 or [lshttrailboss@yahoo.com](mailto:lshttrailboss@yahoo.com) for additional details. Please supply your name and contact info should we need to make changes. ☺

## Katy Prairie

### KATY PRAIRIE DISCOVERY TOUR

#### MARY MANOR PRESERVE

Saturday, March 14, 2009

Visit the Katy Prairie Conservancy's Mary Manor Preserve, which features a vibrant wetland – home to croaking bullfrogs, colorful water birds, and the site of beaver lodges. The Conservancy will have knowledgeable guides on hand to conduct the tour and explain Katy Prairie plants and animals. The KPC is working to conserve and restore habitat for more than 600 species of wildlife and plants. The Mary Manor Preserve tour is scheduled for 10 am to 12 pm. Afterwards we will drive by other nearby KPC properties, including the Warren Ranch, to do some birding for an hour or two. Rendezvous at Rice University at 9:00 am if you want to carpool. Contact Frank Blake, [frankblake@juno.com](mailto:frankblake@juno.com) or 713-528-2896. ☺

## Trail Work

### SAND BRANCH LOOP SECTION OF LSHT

Saturday, March 21, 2009

The Houston Sierra Club will conduct a trail maintenance hike on the Sand Branch Loop of the Lone Star Hiking Trail (LSHT) With the weather still cool and Spring in the air, this will be a great hike. This is a wonderful way to get to know the LSHT and give back by providing service to maintain the LSHT.

Bring your day pack, lunch, water, hiking shoes, and clothes to fit the weather. If you have a loppers or machete bring it. If not the Sierra Club has trail maintenance tools that you can use.

Meet at 8:00 am in the parking lot behind the International House of Pancakes (IHOP) at I-45 North and Greens Road. Look for the green Nissan Mini-van. To reach the parking lot, enter the feeder off I-45 North, via the Greens Road exit, and then pass through the traffic signal at Greens Rd. Turn right into the first strip center you come to (look for Brown Sugar's Barbecue) and drive to the end of the strip center. The parking lot behind IHOP is on the right.

Contact Jane Prentiss at 713-201-5755 or [lshttrailboss@yahoo.com](mailto:lshttrailboss@yahoo.com) for additional details. Please supply your name and contact info should we need to make changes. ☺

## Car Camping

### MARTIN DIES, JR. STATE PARK

March 27-29, 2009

Relish an East Texas Spring weekend outdoors. We should enjoy some early spring blooms and star gazing on this new moon weekend. This is a good trip for beginners as well as experienced campers. Bring your bike, kayak, fishing pole, or just your light hiking shoes as this park on B. A. Steinhagen Lake has a lot to offer including

easy hiking trails and flat park roads. A fee of \$10/person will cover campsite costs with any remainder going to the club; the small park entry fee will be extra.

Contact Rick Rice at [rick.rice@sbcglobal.net](mailto:rick.rice@sbcglobal.net) or 713-680-0585. ☺

### TRASH BASH

Rivers, Lakes, Bays, & Bayous

Saturday, March 28, 2009

Once a year thousands of volunteers gather along Texas waterways to help clean up the environment, and help educate the public about the importance of our water resources.

Visit the website: [www.trashbash.org](http://www.trashbash.org) for a list of the specific bayou and bay sites in the Houston area that will participate this year (15 different locations). Each clean up site has its own schedule, location details, and contact persons, and this is all provided at the website. Generally clean up activities take place between 9am-12noon, with registration taking place beforehand, and a lunch afterward. ☺

## Forest Walk

### LITTLE THICKET NATURE SANCTUARY

Saturday, March 28, 2009

Visit the Outdoor Nature Club's Little Thicket Nature Sanctuary for an all day hike. This sanctuary, which is about a square mile in size, was acquired in the 1950's and has been growing naturally ever since. There are many hiking trails in the Sanctuary and we will visit grasslands, creeks, upland, and slope forests. Spring should bring us many wildflowers and lush new green foliage.

Bring your daypack, water, lunch, hiking shoes, cameras, bug repellent, sunscreen, field guides, and clothes to fit the weather. Long pants are highly recommended! Meet at 7:30 a.m., Rice University, Entrance 13A. As you enter Entrance 13A turn right immediately and look for a blue Plymouth Neon.

This Forest Walk is limited to 15 people. Call Brandt Mannchen at 713-664-5962 so he can take your name, phone number, and email or email him at [brandtshnfbt@juno.com](mailto:brandtshnfbt@juno.com). Your name will be placed on the waiting list. The information collected will be used to contact you in case the Forest Walk is canceled due to inclement weather. ☺

## Class

### BACKPACKING BASICS COURSE

Tentative dates:

April 8, Classroom

April 18-19, Outing

Have you ever wanted to really experience the less traveled sections of a national park or a wilderness area, miles from civilization? Or have you ever been interested in backpacking, but didn't know where to start? Now you can take the first step by enrolling in the Houston Sierra Club's backpacking course. This course has two sections: a classroom portion (with handout) and a weekend outing. The classroom instruction will focus on backpacking equipment (with samples), clothing, water, and food preparation. Instructions on what you will need for the outing will also be explained.

The cost of the classroom portion is a donation to the Houston Sierra Club of \$30. The outing will be restricted to those who have taken the classroom portion, and will be an additional \$15 donation.

# TRIPS AND LOCAL OUTINGS

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Do NOT purchase equipment before the class – you may find that you paid good money for something that you don't need. This course is restricted to adults 18 years of age and over.

Instructors are Kevin Thome (who has completed the entire 2100+ mile Appalachian Trail) and Maynard Chance (veteran of dozens of Houston Sierra Club outings). For more information, please contact Maynard Chance at [maynardrc@comcast.net](mailto:maynardrc@comcast.net) or 713-983-0990. ☎

## New Orleans

### SPRING IN NEW ORLEANS

Thursday-Sunday, April 16 – April 19, 2009

Experience New Orleans through the eyes of a native. Sample the food, the music, the architecture, and the beauty of the Crescent City in springtime. We will stay at a small hotel on St. Charles Avenue and travel by streetcar, bus, and boat within the city. You'll need your walking shoes for this trip as we range from Audubon Park to Algiers and the French Quarter to Bayou St. John. The fee for the trip is \$235 per person, double occupancy.

The trip fee includes the cost of lodging and streetcar/bus transit passes for two full days. The cost for meals and admission ticket fees is not included in the trip fee. Participants are responsible for their own travel arrangements to/from NOLA. It is about a 6-hour drive from Houston and there are plenty of flights with a shuttle service at NOLA's airport. A \$50 deposit holds your place and full payment is due by March 16th. The deposit is refundable until March 16th. There will be a pre-trip meeting scheduled on an evening before the trip. Contact Evelyn Merz at 713-644-8228 or [elmerz@hal-pc.org](mailto:elmerz@hal-pc.org) to reserve a place or for more information. ☎

## Backpacking

### MT. ST. HELENS, WASHINGTON BACKPACK

June 21-28, 2009

The Loowit Loop trail around Mt. St. Helens has been described as "A world class scenic adventure". This above timberline trail offers views of nearby volcanic mountains while traversing through the aftermath of one of Nature's most destructive events, the 1980 eruption of Mt. St. Helens. Waterfalls, pockets of old growth forest, pumice plains, and lava tubes are found off the side trails. This four night 30 mile loop with a summit accent is classified as difficult. We will also spend a couple of days exploring around the Columbia River gorge area. Cost exclusive of air fare and meals should be around \$300. Limit 6. Contact Dale Stevens at [dale\\_stevens9@yahoo.com](mailto:dale_stevens9@yahoo.com) or 281-719-7459. ☎

### NOTICES

Sierra Club is a California non profit corporation, with "California Seller of Travel" registration number: CST 2087766-40. Registration as a seller of travel does not constitute approval by the State of California.

All participants on Sierra Club outings are required to sign a standard liability waiver. If you would like to read the liability waiver before you choose to participate on an outing, please go to <http://www.sierraclub.org/outings/chapter/forms>, or contact the Outings Department at the national Sierra Club office at (415)-977-5528 for a printed version. ☎

## Olympic NP

### OLYMPIC NATIONAL PARK

July 11- 19, 2009 (tentative dates)

This trip will be car camping with a variety of day hikes at Olympic National Park.

The Park is noted for its dramatic Pacific coastline, temperate rainforests, and glaciated alpine peaks, sometimes referred to as "three parks in one". The Park protects over 60 miles of wild coastline, featuring a variety of beaches, tide pools, and sea-stacks, as well as magnificent old growth forest. In 1909 Teddy Roosevelt established Mount Olympus National Monument to protect the Olympic elk, and in 1938 it became a National Park. We will fly to Seattle and travel by mini-van, camping at various locations around the Olympic Peninsula. Note: if we encounter any difficulties securing our preferred camping locations at Olympic, we have an alternate trip plan for the north Oregon coast and Mt. Hood region. For more information, contact Frank Blake, at [frankblake@juno.com](mailto:frankblake@juno.com) or 713-528-2896, or Lorraine Gibson, at [raineygib@aol.com](mailto:raineygib@aol.com) or 281-384-4104. ☎

Wow! Lots of things to do.

Yes, day outings, weekend car camping, a class, a 4-day trip, and more. What do you want to do?

Well, I was hoping for a picnic.

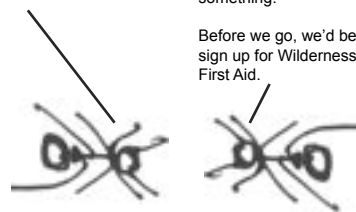
Hmm. Sorry about that, but you might try the Trash Bash.

Good thought.

And the new backpackers are bound to spill something.

Let's go!

Before we go, we'd better sign up for Wilderness First Aid.



See the outings calendar at our website <http://houston.sierraclub.org> for possible additions to schedule. Click **Calendar**, then scroll down to **Quick Links**.

### SUSTAINING GALVESTON BAY

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Water Quality"; "Educating Stewards" over "How Human Behaviors Impact the Bay"? The greatest value of the symposium for me is learning who is working on what projects, and how to reach those people when you need knowledgeable advice on a specialized location or field of expertise.

There was considerable excitement over the appearance this year of Dr. William Smith, Executive Director of the Academy for Educational Development.

Dr. Smith, a social marketing expert, reinvented the Chesapeake Bay Program's public relations campaign by renaming it the Chesapeake Club, and producing ads with cutting edge humor, including the slogan "Save the Crabs... then Eat 'Em." To see an amusing marketing coup, go to [www.chesapeakeclub.org](http://www.chesapeakeclub.org) and check the TV ads!

The proceedings of the State of the Bay Symposium can be accessed online at [www.tceq.state.tx.us/goto/publications](http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/goto/publications). What the proceedings will not tell you, and what the Houston Chronicle has not told you, is the incredible proposal presented by TAMUG's Dr. William Merrell, and backed by Galveston Mayor Thomas and Galveston County Judge Yarbrough, which is dubbed the "Ike Dike". This is a plan to extend the present seawall from High Island to Freeport, with Rotterdam-inspired floodgates at San Luis Pass and Bolivar Roads, for protection from future storm surges.

A link for more information on this Ike Dike is <http://galvestondailynews.com/story.lasso?ewcd=b cad9c1061aaf16cc8545f57966c90b3>. It is definitely something that I, and the Galveston Bay Foundation, will be watching. I far prefer the plan proposed to me over lunch by Tom Ivy, our fellow Sierran who also attended State of the Bay; Tom suggested that those wishing to build in coastal flood zones be required to post a bond, so that those funds could be used for clean-up when their homes are driven by hurricanes into wildlife refuges and nature sanctuaries. Sustainability of Galveston Bay is a complicated issue, but I have difficulty accepting an Ike Dike as a solution for our valuable estuary. ☎

### Recycling

#### BEST BUY EXPANDS ELECTRONICS RECYCLING PROGRAM

by Frank Blake

In January, Best Buy Co., Inc. announced that it would expand its electronics recycling program to all of its 1,006 stores in the U.S. as of February 15, 2009.

Under this program, consumers can bring up to two (2) units per day, per household, for recycling at any U.S. Best Buy store. Best Buy will accept most consumer electronics, including televisions and monitors up to 32", computer CPUs and notebooks, small electronics, VCR and DVD players, and phones, as well as accessories such as keyboards, mice, and remotes.

A \$10 recycling fee per unit will be charged for items with screens, such as televisions, laptop computers, and

Continued on Page 4

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monitors. The consumer will instantly receive a \$10 Best Buy gift card in exchange for the recycling fee. (This fee does not apply for units recycled in California stores, and certain Best Buy branded products.)

Some items cannot be accepted through this program, such as television or monitor screens greater than 32", console televisions, items containing Freon, microwaves, etc. For complete details consult the Best Buy recycling program web pages.

Also, Best Buy reportedly has recycling kiosks at the front of every store, where ink cartridges, rechargeable batteries, cell phones, CDs, DVDs, and PDA/smart phones can be dropped off for free recycling. 🌍

## BILL FILED TO ENCOURAGE RE-USABLE BAGS

by Frank Blake

In the last year or so, a number of U.S. cities have taken steps to discourage or phase out the use of disposable plastic shopping bags, including Los Angeles, Seattle, and San Francisco. Besides creating a pervasive litter problem, discarded plastic bags clog municipal sewer systems, pollute waterways, harm wildlife, and add to the clean up costs of local governments and taxpayers.

In December, State Senator Leticia Van de Putte, D-San Antonio, filed Senate Bill 338 for the current Texas legislative session, which would require businesses that provide customers with plastic checkout bags to also offer for sale a reusable bag as an alternative.

The reusable bag would have to be reasonably priced and could be made of cloth or other machine washable fabric, a thick plastic or other material. The bill also would require that a business provide a plastic checkout bag recycling program if it offers plastic bags to customers. This bill is seen as a first step in the effort to reign in the use of disposable plastic bags in Texas. Van de Putte has met with many retailers and has received a lot of positive feedback. H-E-B Grocery Co. reportedly supports the legislation and has worked with the State Senator on it.

It is estimated that nearly 12 million barrels of oil are required to make the billions of plastic shopping bags consumed by Americans each year, and the manufacturing process generates gases that contribute to global warming. Please contact your State Senator and Representative and ask that they support Senate Bill 338. 🌍

## PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS TO ELECTRONICS TAKEBACK LAW

In 2007, the Texas Legislature passed a computer take back bill, mandating that manufacturers provide free recycling for any home use computers sold in the state. In the current session of the Legislature there will be an effort to extend and strengthen the Texas Producer TakeBack Law (HB 2714), so that it will cover television sets and other electronics. Other goals in strengthening the law include a disposal ban on landfilling or incinerating e-waste, a disclosure requirement on any e-waste export to developing countries, and funding for public education on appropriate e-waste disposal.

Each year as many as 50 million new TVs are sold in the U.S. Both old and new TVs contain an array of toxic chemicals and heavy metals that should not end up in landfills or incinerators, or become the responsibility of overburdened local governments.

Please write your state legislators and ask them to support this effort.

Sample letter:

State Representative \_\_\_\_\_  
P.O. Box 2910  
Austin, TX 78768

State Senator \_\_\_\_\_  
P.O. Box 12068  
Austin, TX 78711

Dear \_\_\_\_\_,

I am writing to urge you to extend the Texas Producer TakeBack Law to cover TVs and other electronics in 2009. The digital switch will send millions of old TVs to dumps unless their manufacturers recycle them.

Please strengthen the law to ensure that e-waste will not be dumped in developing countries, sent to prison recycling plants, or end up in our landfills and incinerators.

Please respond to my comments in writing, or via email to: (your e-mail address here).

Sincerely,  
Your Name and Your Address 🌍

## Obituary

### SIERRA CLUB FOREST LOVER PASSES AWAY

by Brandt Mannchen

**Nancy Singleton**, Sierra Club member and forest lover and friend, passed away on December 19, 2008. Nancy came to the Sierra Club searching for knowledge about her family's property in Grimes County. Nancy loved the Loblolly Pine and hardwood forest that has been in her family for many years and which she grew up loving.

Nancy participated with the Sierra Club on forest issues for several years and then fulfilled her dream of moving to the family land to live and work. It broke Nancy's heart when the property had to be divided because another family, who co-owned the property, wanted to log the forest. Nancy tried to buy the forest but could not raise the money to keep the property together.

Nancy invited the Sierra Club to visit her forest on several occasions and we did. It was wonderful hiking through the woods with Nancy and seeing the remnant Loblolly Pine, Black Gum, Black Hickory, and other trees. Nancy's forest had a huge number of flowering dogwoods that simply surrounded the farm house and lit up the forest during spring. Coral root orchids grew in a hardwood grove near her farm house and birds could be heard almost incessantly, including Pileated Woodpeckers.

Nancy also loved animals and one of the delights of visiting her forest was meeting her herd of basset hounds and petting her two horses. Nancy was a strong feminist and railed at injustice wherever it occurred. Nancy was truly a goddess of nature and love. We will miss you. 🌍



The ant seen on these pages is the fictitious *Sieromeyrmex houstonensis*, drawn for and named after the Houston Sierra Club by world-famous biologist E. O. Wilson.

## 2008 ANNUAL AUCTION THANK YOU ALL

Our 2007 Annual Fundraising Auction was a big success thanks to the coordinated efforts of our generous donors, bidders and volunteers. Below is a list of major donors and items donated to the auction. We encourage all members to support any venues or artists listed below. The Houston Group of the Sierra Club sincerely appreciates their support and donations.

- Dave Barziza, Hand turned wooden bowl
- Deb Elliot, handcrafted artwork and jewelry
- Steve Green, 1/2 day sailing aboard 36' foot sailboat
- Hand Me Downs, Joyce McCameron, 713-660-7434, 5257 Buffalo Speedway, gift certificate and purse
- Judy Jones, jewelry and variety of items
- Las Magicas Gallery, Madeleine Crozant-Williams, 4819 Blossom, www.lasmanosmagicas.com, folk art
- Lola Savannah Coffee Company, www.lolacc.com, 713-222-9800, 10 – 1 lb packages variety coffee beans
- Luminous Ground Design, Mary Edwards, www.luminousround.net, 281-989-5517, 30 gal container Texas Sago Palm
- Ann and Joe Liggio, Autographed book "Wild Orchids of Texas", Septarian Nodule, calcite Geode, 50- 70million yrs. old, and Petrified wood from Catahoula formation in E. Texas
- Matthew Goff Investments, www.matthewgoff.com, Tax, Estate and Financial Planning gift certificates
- Nationwide Tools, Ray Doherty, 6100 N. Shepherd, 713-697-6245. Metabo Cordless Drill/Screwdriver
- Captain Tommy Moore, www.rockportadventures.com, 877 TX BIRDS, "Skimmer" Boat tour tickets and 1 night stay at Inn at Fulton Harbor
- Trevor Pugh, Soaring Demonstration Flight with Soaring Club of Houston
- Selia Qynn, 2 tickets for Habitat House Concert Series, www.selia.com
- Silver Cloud Massage, Billy Joe Lopez, Jr. 1202 W. Dallas, 832-577-3731, Massage Certificates
- Ron Reeves and Teresa Allen, Hard Carved Walking Stick, Millbend Coffee House(www.millbend.org) event tickets, and other miscellaneous items
- Page Williams, 2 tickets for Society of Performing Arts "Les Ballets, Trockadero de Monte
- Vojtech Stroller, Thule Cargo Box and Roof Rack
- Lesly Van Dame, Hermes "Eau Des Merveilles" perfume and leather jacket
- Anastasia Voight, anastasia3r@aol.com, painted denim jacket and miscellaneous artwork
- David Waters, Dinner for 2 and Concert at Shepherd School at Rice University
- Jacqueline Weaver, variety of items from around the world
- Tom Yeager, 2 house concert tickets for Songbird Sanctuary, http://www.houstonstorytellers.org, 713-524-6545

If you would like information regarding our Annual Auction please contact Arlene Diehl, 281-252-4639 or arlenediehl@peoplepc.com. 🌱

## FUND APPEAL DONORS THANK YOU ALL

The donor list in the previous edition contained some errors and failed to show categories. Here is the correct list.- Ed.

### Dynamo, \$250-\$499

Sanae Kelly  
Evelyn Merz & John Berlinghoff

### Contributor, \$100-\$249

Anonymous  
Peter Birch  
Paul Elliott  
Stinson Gibner  
Lorraine Gibson  
Adra Hooks  
Carl & Penny Lindsey  
John Lindsey  
Susan Lynn  
M D Pharmacy Inc  
Brandt Mannchen  
Patrick Warren

### Supporter, \$50-\$99

Anonymous (5)  
Teresa Allen & Ronald Reeves  
Elaine & Victor Chapman Jr  
Michael Dowling  
Vean & Jessica Gregg  
Eva Hern  
Adra Hooks  
Carol Lee  
M D Pharmacy Inc  
Robert & Margaret Montgomery  
Christina & Paul Scott  
C P Sweeney  
Anne Tincher  
Kenneth & Sara Tyler  
Robet Whitworth & Kayo Ansen

### Helping Hand, \$1-\$49

Anonymous (4)  
Bernice Beckerman  
Clay & Brenda Bowman  
J Butler  
Gene Caldwell  
Carl Doby  
Ray Dogherty  
Holly Eaton  
Dallas & Karen Ives  
Patricia & Herman Kreese Jr  
Paul Lucas  
Cynthia McCarthy  
Margaret & Robert Montgomery  
Jon & Glenna Pfenning  
K T Rapstein  
Ronald Schoenwolf  
Ernest Schwaiger  
Jan & Bernard Silver  
Lydia Jean Westbrook  
Anna Marie Wirt  
Donald Younger



## FGBNMS MANAGEMENT PLAN

by Brandt Mannchen

The Flower Garden Banks National Marine Sanctuary (FGBNMS) — the only NMS in the Gulf of Mexico (GOM) — is the northern most coral reef in the GOM. It lies about 100 miles south southeast of Galveston and brings the Caribbean to our doorstep. In a climate change world where many coral reefs are declining it is in very healthy condition. From the late 1960's to 1992, when the FGBNMS was established, many people fought for the protection of this unique, underwater, Texas treasure.

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) has plans in 2009 for the FGBNMS: soon NOAA will release a draft management plan (MP), environmental impact statement (EIS),

regulatory revision, boundary expansion, and hopefully an experimental scientific area for the FGBNMS. The MP is supposed to be revised every 5 years so we are 12 years overdue. The MP tells how the FGBNMS will be managed, protected, and compatibly used. Currently diving, fishing, scientific research, and educational activities are allowed. Concerns include water quality, fishing impacts, visitor use, regional habitat protection, education and outreach, and enforcement. Illegal ship anchoring is a grave problem because the anchors and chains can destroy fragile coral sponge reefs.

How can you help? Ask FGBNMS and put you on its mailing or contact list so that you will receive notice of the release of the DMP and EIS, regulatory revision, and boundary expansion. Then comment on the draft MP and EIS so that we can always enjoy a protected FGBNMS. Contact NOAA at:

Flower Garden Banks National Marine Sanctuary, NOAA, 4700 Avenue U, Building 216, Galveston, Texas 77551, 409-621-5151, <http://www.flowergarden.noaa.gov>, [flowergarden@noaa.gov](mailto:flowergarden@noaa.gov). 🌱

It's nice to know that some companies are helping their customers recycle electronic equipment.

That's right, but there is something you need to think about.

What's that?

It's better to reuse before you recycle.

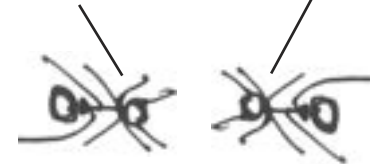
But doesn't the recycling symbol just emphasize recycling?

The recycling symbol has three sides. I like to think of them as "use," "reuse," and "recycle."

Reusing certainly can reduce amount that goes into land fills.

And recycling will, also, of course. Be sure to check the last page for recycling resources.

And remember that lots of things can be given to charities for reuse.



## KROGER NEIGHBOR TO NEIGHBOR PROGRAM

If you shop at Kroger you can help support the Houston Sierra Club financially by linking your Kroger Card to support the Houston Group. This year Kroger re-organized their community giving process, and to participate in the new program shoppers need to get the Houston Sierra Club 'bar code' and have that scanned and linked to their Kroger card. This can reportedly be done by any Kroger cashier in a check out line.

You can obtain a copy of the instructions and the Houston Sierra Club bar code (in a PDF file) by contacting Frank Blake, [frankblake@juno.com](mailto:frankblake@juno.com) or 713-528-2896; or Lorraine Gibson, [raineygib@aol.com](mailto:raineygib@aol.com) or 713-436-1833.

## TTC NAME CHANGE TAX PAYERS LOOK OUT!

by Brandt Mannchen

Is the Trans-Texas Corridor Dead?

The Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) announced on January 6, 2009 that the Trans-Texas Corridor (TTC) is dead. Amadeo Saenz, Executive Director of TxDOT stated "The TTC, as a single project concept, is not the choice of Texans. So we've decided to put the name to rest" and "Make no mistake: The Trans-Texas Corridor as we have known it no longer exists." Governor Rick Perry was quoted as saying "The name Trans Texas Corridor is over with. We're going to continue to build roads in the state of Texas."

So the answer to the question, "Is the Trans-Texas Corridor Dead?," is a clear, NO! Once again the **TxDOT is not leveling with the public**. All the fanfare is over the decision to not use a name. But huge, privatized, road projects that will affect thousands of Texans and cost billions of taxpayer dollars are still on the drawing board and will move forward.

What has changed? TxDOT has tried to change the public image and political reality of the situation. Calling an unacceptable, massive, road project by segment names or by the new and undecipherable name "Innovative Connectivity in Texas/Vision 2009" will not change what we really have: state leaders and transportation officials who are arrogant and mislead the public.

Think about what has been said about the new project and name "Innovative Connectivity." The road corridors will no longer be 1,200 feet in width but closer to 600 feet in width. So we find out that a road that is two football fields wide is supposed to be a smaller, gentler, highway. We are told that whenever feasible the roads will be built in existing right-of-ways. Notice the "whenever feasible" language.

The massive Interstate 69, about 650 miles in length, is not dead. The massive Interstate 35 alternative that goes from Austin to Dallas, is not dead. The multiple tens of billions of dollar price tag, is not dead. The commitment to build 1,000's of miles of toll roads is not dead. The commitment to privatize Texas roads, via comprehensive development agreements, is not dead. The media has reported that Governor Perry has emphasized that the most important part of the plan for him, using private money for toll roads, will continue.

Amadeo Saenz has stated that all parts of the TTC, including toll-ways, can be built as stand-alone projects

when necessary and was quoted that "Projects that had been developed under the heading of the TTC will now become a series of individual projects."

TxDOT will not admit it wasted money pushing TTC. A TxDOT spokesperson was quoted as saying "We're still going to build Texas 130 ... we're still going to build I-69 ... Maybe we wasted some money developing a TTC logo, but that's about it." As the spokesperson for TxDOT said "The name is dead. The roads will continue. These are roads that are needed for the state."

Sounds like a strategy to divide and conquer. By forcing the public to deal with many projects the entire cost and environmental impacts to landowners and the public will be diffused and hidden. Sounds like the same old TxDOT arrogance. Sounds like an agency that has not learned its' lesson. Some things never change! 🌍

## ISLANDS IN THE STREAM – A DREAM OR A REALITY?

by Brandt Mannchen

Over 2008 there was an effort to get President Bush to designate a series of important marine areas across the Gulf of Mexico (GOM), called "Islands in the Stream," as a national monument. The effort unfortunately has not succeeded, in part because numerous interests want to participate and shape what such a marine protected area (MPA) might look like. Some of these interests include shipping industry, oil/gas industry, recreational fishing industry, commercial fishing industry, commercial diving industry, recreational divers, recreational fishers, scientists, and environmental advocates.

Recently, Dan Basta, Director of the Office of National Marine Sanctuaries in NOAA spoke to the Flower Garden Banks National Marine Sanctuary advisory council (an appointed group made up of environmental, fishing, diving, oil/gas, and commercial interests) about "Islands in the Stream." Director Basta stated that the GOM is a priority and the key to protection of marine areas and provision of energy. The GOM leads the nation in investment in and footprint of energy, has much marine shipping, is connected to more of America than any other ocean body, is an international place, is connected by its ecosystems, and is the ocean body that we know the most about.

According to Director Basta the GOM is the place to demonstrate that we can change, save our marine resources, resolve conflicts, and get along. Energy development can co-exist with marine ecosystems. The

"Islands in the Stream" name comes from underwater buttes, mesas, and coral reefs that make up many seafloor habitat islands that encircle the GOM from Campeche Banks in Mexico to the Florida Keys. Many of these so-called "topographical highs" (THs) were created by the intrusion of salt domes through undersea sediments. The THs range from about a fifth of a square mile to 460 square miles in size, are about 70-100 miles off the coast, and exist in water depths of 200-300 feet.

These small rises on the bottom of the GOM are extremely productive for fish, sea turtles, shellfish, sea mammals, and other marine creatures. The THs are tied together by ocean circulation which brings the larvae of sea animals and fish so that constant and continuous seeding of these areas occur. THs serve as feeding and breeding grounds and refugia (safe places) in times of change in the GOM. Some of the "Islands in the Stream" include South Texas Banks, Pinnacles, Pulley Ridge, Florida Middle Grounds, Northwestern Gulf Reefs and Banks, Steamboat Lumps, and Campeche Banks.

Support for an "Islands in the Stream" marine protected area is needed now! How can you show your support? Write to Director Basta at the address below and tell him you want a public participation process that leads to the designation and protective management of the "Islands in the Stream."

Write Director Basta at:

Mr. Dan Basta  
Director  
Office of National Marine Sanctuaries  
NOAA  
SSMC4, N/ORM62  
1305 East-West Highway  
Silver Spring, Maryland 20910 🌍

### JOIN THE SIERRA CLUB

Just go to our web site  
<http://Houston.sierraclub.org/>  
and click on  
Join or Give/Membership Benefits

For a limited time:

Only \$25  
Get a FREE rucksack  
See it online

Part of your payment  
comes back to support the  
Houston Sierra Club

# ANNOUNCEMENTS

## ENVIRONMENTAL INJUSTICE IN TEXAS

**Saturday, March 21, 2009, 8:45 AM to 5 PM**

This is a conference of the Houston Peace and Justice Center (HPJC). Speakers and panelists will focus on defining the issue of environmental injustice, the responsibility of a person of faith, and the responsibility of the state. Our workshops target turning environmental injustice into environmental justice for our crucial Texas issues: Air Quality; Water Quality; Waste and Recycling; and Habitat Loss and Fragmentation. The Houston Sierra Club, a member of HPJC, has helped develop this conference.

Go to [www.hpjc.org](http://www.hpjc.org) for information and registration, or contact Awanda Whitworth at 713-688-1060 or [mklawandaw@aol.com](mailto:mklawandaw@aol.com).



## GENERAL MEETING IS MOVING

Beginning in **April**, 2009, the monthly General Meeting of the Houston Sierra Club will meet on the

### SECOND THURSDAY

of every month in Pecore Hall of **ST. STEPHENS EPISCOPAL CHURCH**  
**1805 WEST ALABAMA**

(at the corner of West Alabama and Woodhead). Ample parking is available behind the church. Doors open at 7:00 PM; the formal meeting starts at 7:30 PM.

***This does not apply to the March meeting.***

## OUTINGS NOTICES

If you are interested in getting reminder notices of the bike rides and other outings please email John Berlinghoff at [johnb@hal-pc.org](mailto:johnb@hal-pc.org).

## MARYSEE PRAIRIE WORK DAYS

**First Saturdays during spring,  
March 7, April 4, May 2**

The Marysee Prairie is one of the last remnants of tallgrass prairie in the Big Thicket region. Come assist the Big Thicket Association in this ongoing effort to revive and maintain the native grasses and wildflowers on this site near Batson, Texas. Work tasks vary by month, but usually involve removal of tallow seedlings, and controlling the regrowth of woody species. Tools and gloves provided. For more info, contact Susan Schinke at [sruth@consolidated.net](mailto:sruth@consolidated.net) or 936-829-5204, or Frank Blake at [frankblake@juno.com](mailto:frankblake@juno.com) or 713-528-2896.

## WILDERNESS FIRST AID CLASS

**Saturday and Sunday, June 13 and 14, 2009  
Monday and Tuesday, June 15 and 16, 2009**

Houston Sierra Club is hosting two two-day Wilderness First Aid classes, one on a weekend, the other on weekdays. Course completion provides wilderness first aid certification.

Location: Lake Houston State Park. Cost: \$150.

If you are interested, please contact Angie Langolf at 713-467-6875 or email [on.the.go@sbcglobal.net](mailto:on.the.go@sbcglobal.net).

## WANT BREAKING NEWS?

Check our website:  
<http://houston.sierraclub.org/>.

Since the print copy of the Banner takes several weeks from editorial deadline to members' mail boxes, some late-planned activities appear only on the web site.

Some activities shown on this page are not managed by the Houston Sierra Club.

## RENEWING YOUR MEMBERSHIP

The Houston Sierra Club gets a small part of your membership renewal fee (the rest of it is used by the National Sierra Club and the Lone Star Chapter of the Sierra Club). The amount passed to the Houston Sierra Club is more if you use a credit card and renew on line through our website than if you mail a check.

## INFORMATION FOR ADVERTISERS

The Bayou Banner is the newsletter of the Houston Regional Group of the Sierra Club (also known as the Houston Sierra Club). It is published 10 times per year, with single issues for July-August and December-January. All advertising must be compatible with the mission of the Sierra Club, and it must be approved by the Executive Committee of the Houston Regional Group of the Sierra Club. The circulation is over 5,000 per issue.

Discounts are applied only if an order for all issues is made in advance. Back page and preferred pages may not be available in some issues.

Contact George Batten, Editor:  
[BayouBanner@lonestar.sierraclub.org](mailto:BayouBanner@lonestar.sierraclub.org)  
713-665-1505

## Rate Schedule

1/3 page	\$160.00 per issue
1/4 page	\$125.00 " "
1/8 page	\$ 75.00 " "
1/18 page	\$ 45.00 " "

(1/18 page is business card size)

## Discounts

2 issues	3%
3 issues	5%
4 issues	6%
6 issues	10%
10 issues	15%

## Additional

Back page (if available)  
+50%  
Preferred page  
(other than front or back page)  
+25%

## OUR MISSION STATEMENT

1. Explore, enjoy, and protect the wild places of the earth.
2. Practice and promote responsible use of the earth's ecosystems and resources.
3. Educate and enlist humanity to protect and restore the quality of the natural and human environment.
4. Use all lawful means to carry out these objectives.



**SIERRA CLUB**  
FOUNDED 1892

# BAYOU BANNER

Newsletter of the Houston Regional Group of the Sierra Club

Volume 33, No. 2

<http://houston.sierraclub.org>

March, 2009

The Bayou Banner is the newsletter of the Houston Regional Group of the Sierra Club. It is published 10 times a year by the Houston Sierra Club. Circulation is 5,000 issues that are mailed to members and distributed through various outlets.

EDITOR: George Batten

Email: [BayouBanner@gmail.com](mailto:BayouBanner@gmail.com)

website: <http://houston.sierraclub.org>

Opinions stated are those of the authors and not necessarily those of the Houston Sierra Club.

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The Sierra Club — Houston Group • P.O. Box 3021 • Houston, TX 77253-3021

# VOLUNTEER NEWS AND NOTES

## MONTHLY MEETINGS

### GENERAL MONTHLY MEETING:

First Thursday monthly at the Central Presbyterian Church, 3788 Richmond. Parking is off Timmons (north of convenience store). The meeting opens at 7:00 PM, and the program starts at 7:30 PM. Everyone is welcome.

### CONSERVATION:

Second Wednesday monthly, 7:00 PM, at the CEC Conference Room, 3015 Richmond, 2nd Floor. Call first to confirm date and topics. Contact Frank Blake, 713-528-2896, frankblake @ junio.com.

### EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE:

Fourth Thursday monthly, 7:00 PM, Houston Calyton Library, 5300 Caroline. Contact Jim Williams at ezz @ pdq.net.

### INNER CITY OUTINGS (ICO):

Normally the second Tuesday every month, 7:00 PM, at a place to be determined. No meeting in March. Please contact Angie Langolf at 713-467-6875 or on.the.go@sbcglobal.net for more information.

### OUTINGS:

Usually the third Monday of the month, 7:00 PM, at the Whole Foods store on Bellaire near Weslayan. Help us plan regional day outings, weekend trips, and air/bus trips to exciting outdoor destinations across the country. Please call to confirm meeting date. Frank Blake, 713-528-2896, frankblake@ junio.com.

### AIR QUALITY

The Air Quality Subcommittee will meet on the third Wednesday of each month, 7:30 pm, at 5431 Carew.

## RECYCLING RESOURCES

### CITY OF HOUSTON RECYCLING

The City of Houston has several drop off sites (note: some are specialized for certain items), and provides curbside recycling in many neighborhoods. Principal drop off locations are the Westpark Consumer Recycling Center at 5900 Westpark, and the self serve site at 3602 Center Street in the Heights. For other locations and a complete list of recyclable items, consult the City's recycling web page. One can also phone the City's 311 hotline with recycling questions, or connect to [www.houstontx.gov/solidwaste/recycling.html](http://www.houstontx.gov/solidwaste/recycling.html)

### BELLAIRE, TX RECYCLING CENTER

4402 Edith, Bellaire Tx 77401

Open for drop offs: 8am-5pm, 7 days a week Accepts a good range of items, consult web page for details: [www.ci.bellaire.tx.us/index.asp?SID=289](http://www.ci.bellaire.tx.us/index.asp?SID=289).

### BELLAIRE RECYCLING COMMITTEE

This group has a useful website, with a variety of info on recycling activities in the Houston area. Committee phone line is 713-662-8173. [bellairerecycles.org/index.html](http://bellairerecycles.org/index.html).

### HUNTSVILLE

The City of Huntsville's recycling facility — north of town on the I-45 access road — takes cardboard, paper, tin and aluminum cans, glass, used oil, plastics, and has a warehouse for reusable donated construction materials (doors, windows, tile, wood etc). One employee is available Monday-Friday to help you unload; it is self-service on Saturday. The web site is [http://www.huntsvilletx.gov/residents/trash\\_and\\_recycling/recycling.asp](http://www.huntsvilletx.gov/residents/trash_and_recycling/recycling.asp).

### PEARLAND RECYCLING CENTER

5800 Magnolia Road in Pearland, Texas, 77584, 281-489-2795. Takes most recyclable wastes: PC's, TV's, plastics, bottles, cans, paper, etc.

### WEST UNIVERSITY RECYCLING CENTER

5004 Dincans (just south of Westpark near Kirby)

Open for drop offs 24/7; [www.westu.org](http://www.westu.org).

Know one that's missing? Tell us:  
BayouBanner @ gmail.com

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

### March 2009

5 General Meeting  
27-29 Camping: Martin Dies, Jr. SP  
28 Trash Bash

### April 2009

9 General Meeting  
**NEW DATE AND LOCATION!!**  
8 Backpacking Class: Classroom  
16-19 Trip: Spring in New Orleans  
18-19 Backpacking Class: Outing

### Houston Sierra Club E-MAIL ALERT LIST

Subscribe to the Houston Sierra Club's E-mail alert list to get timely alerts on Houston area conservation issues, and occasional announcements of interest to Houston Sierra Club members. *(Whenever you want to drop from the list it is easy to unsubscribe yourself—those instructions will be included.)*

#### INSTRUCTIONS:

Send FROM the E-mail address to which you want to direct the messages. Subscribe by sending to:

LISTSERV@LISTS.SIERRACLUB.ORG

Subject: [this line may be left blank]  
Message Body:  
SUBSCRIBE  
LONESTAR-HOUSTON-ANNOUNCE  
YourFirstName YourLastName

*(Insert YOUR name in place of "YourFirstName YourLastName")*

That's it. You will receive confirmation messages. from the listserve. Thanks for your interest. If you have any difficulty, contact frankblake@ junio.com.

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EDITOR: George Batten  
email: BayouBanner @ gmail.com

CHANGE OF ADDRESS: Telephone 415-977-5633 or send address changes to Sierra Club Membership, PO Box 52968, Boulder, CO 80322, or via email to [address.changes@sierraclub.org](mailto:address.changes@sierraclub.org).

Include both old and new addresses and allow 6 weeks for delivery of the first issue. Please DO NOT CONTACT THE EDITOR FOR CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

SUBMISSIONS: The deadline to submit articles is the last Thursday of the second month before the month in which the articles are to run. All submissions must have the author's name, and contact information (including phone number) even though it will not be printed. Articles may be edited for clarity, accuracy, and space considerations. Opinions stated are those of the author and not necessarily that of the Houston Sierra Club. Send articles via email to BayouBanner @ gmail.com; if sent as attachments, the preferred format is RTF. Preferred formats for pictures are PDF, JPEG, and TIF (300 dpi or greater resolution). No MS Publisher (PUB) files, please.

## HOUSTON REGIONAL GROUP 713-895-9309 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

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George Batten BayouBanner @ gmail.com  
(Vice-chair and Bayou Banner Editor)

Lorraine Gibson (Treasurer) raineygib @ aol.com

John Sims (Secretary) JohnSimsJr @ sbcglobal.net

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See the Bayou Banner on the club website:  
<http://houston.sierraclub.org/news/index.htm#banner>