



Dedicated to Members and
Friends of the Bayou
Preservation Association

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Fall, 2009

SAVE THE DATE



WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 21, 2009

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Our mission is to protect and restore the richness and diversity of our waterways through activism, advocacy, collaboration and education.

From the desk of Kathy Lord — Executive Director of the BPA

BPA Gala Promises to Be Unforgettable

“Play It Again, Sam” is the logical theme for the Bayou Preservation Association’s 2009 gala since the 2008 fundraiser, “Casablanca: An Oasis on the Bayou,” was canceled at the last minute due to Hurricane Ike. Co-chairs Cecily and Rick Burleson and Meredith and Fielding Cocke, along with honorary co-chairs Kristen J. Cannon and Brittany Zucker, promise an unforgettable evening of fabulous food with Middle Eastern and North African influences, Moroccan-themed décor and excellent entertainment outdoors on the banks of Buffalo Bayou.

Our DJ will spin tunes on the dance floor, while Rick Akrie creates a laid back ambience “tickling the ivories” in Rick’s American Café piano bar. Guests can “shake it like a sheik” or relax to mellow sounds, depending on the mood. And don’t forget our spectacular silent auction. Funds raised will support our ongoing efforts to ensure the health of Houston-area waterways.

When: Wednesday, October 21st at 7 p.m.

Tickets: \$200 per person and can be purchased online at www.bayoupreservation.org

Don’t miss out on this year’s gala, which will be a highlight of the fall social season. I look forward to seeing you at the party on October 21st.

2009 BPA Symposium — Stormwater, The Underfunded Asset: The Economics of Stormwater Solutions

BPA board member Becky Olive and the Symposium Committee Members Elle Anderson, Jason Iken, Ty Kelly, Kathy Lord, Carl Masterson, Kevin Shanley, and Martin Trent have been hard at work planning this year’s water symposium, “Stormwater, The Underfunded Asset: The Economics of Stormwater Solutions,” to be held Friday, November 13 at the United Way of Greater Houston office, 50 Waugh Drive, not far from the BPA office.

The event promises to be educational and enlightening, with lots of lively discussion. This year’s symposium is one day in length instead of two as in the past. It begins with registration from 7:30 – 8 a.m. and ends at 4 p.m.

A variety of speakers from business, government, academia, the legal profession and non-profit organizations will cover topics under three general categories: “Asset Management

and Sustainability – Where Are We?”; “Asset Improvement and Growth – Where Are We Going”? and “Asset Funding – How Can It Be Done”?

BPA Board President Ty Kelly will welcome participants and give the introduction, as well as tie in the three past symposia sponsored by the Bayou Preservation Association. Morning sessions will run until noon, when the lunch will be served.

Besides the City of Houston, Harris County, and Harris County Flood Control District, organizations represented will include the National Wildlife Federation and the Environmental Protection Agency. Speakers from AECOM, Trendmaker Development and the University of Houston will also make presentations.

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The event is open to the public. Registration fee \$50 (including Treebeards lunch). Please call the BPA office at 713.529.6443 or check the web site at www.bayoupreservation.org for the latest information. ●

The BPA would like to thank the Event Sponsors: Houston-Galveston Area Council, Texas Commission on Environmental Quality, Kellogg Brown & Root, LLC (KBR), Houston Endowment, Inc., and AECOM.



BPA Hosts Exhibit for *WaterWorks for Houston*

Information provided by Brenda Templeton, City of Houston

More than 1,800 students and 200 parents and teachers converged on the Downtown Aquarium May 7th for the 16th annual *WaterWorks for Houston* Festival to learn about Houston's water supply and how to protect it from pollutants. The City's Department of Public Works and Engineering (PWE), Public Utilities Division, Drinking Water Operations Branch, sponsors the festival to highlight the need for clean water throughout the hydrological cycle.

The City also sponsored two student art contests to raise awareness about Houston's drinking water resources and to inspire citizens to be life-long environmental stewards.



Jennifer Hawkins, BPA Development Director, demonstrates a watershed model

Bayou Preservation Association, led by Executive Director Kathy Lord, hosted one of the 30 exhibits that provided

educational activities and take-home materials to the students. Other exhibitors included: the Greensheet Educational Foundation, Houston-Galveston Area Council, Port of Houston Authority, Texas Commission on Environmental Quality and Galveston Bay Foundation.

Houston-area science teachers and administrators are eager to bring their students to the event because of its educational value and environmental focus. Many attendees learn for the first time about the divergent paths of rainwater and tap water and the difference between the storm water and wastewater systems. Children and chaperones are always amazed to find out about the city's surface and groundwater supply and how it is treated and then delivered to 2.8 million people each day.

High school students attended a series of mini-seminars to learn about water-related career opportunities from professional engineers to environmental educators.

At the noon Dedication Ceremony, City of Houston Controller Annise Parker spoke about local water issues and presented PWE Director Mike Marcotte with a Mayoral Proclamation declaring May as National Drinking Water Awareness Month. Ms. Parker and Mr. Marcotte also congratulated the winner of the Water Works for Houston T-Shirt design contest, Alejandro Lopez of D.R.A.W. Academy, and the winner of the high school art contest, Patricia Wells of Jesse Jones High School. Wells was awarded a special gift of free canoe trip rides donated by BPA. ●

Earth Day Event Draws All Ages to Learn, Have Fun

A cool Saturday in April brought out thousands of people to downtown's Discovery Green to the first Earth Day celebration sponsored by Mothers for Clean Air, kicking off with a 5K run at 8 a.m. with 800 runners and walkers. All total, about 8,000 folks joined in the fun and festivities on April 11, which

included stations for air, land, water, renewable energy, a Farmers' Market, environmental education and kids' area.

Bayou Preservation Association was in charge of the water zone, where BPA volunteers and staff handed out brochures and demonstrated various as-

pects of water including the water runoff display which shows how water leaves a watershed; a "do it yourself" rainwater collection system; pervious and impervious rocks to highlight drainage differences and a canoe to emphasize the Buffalo Bayou paddling

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trail, which attracted many adults and children just for the curiosity factor. The kids especially enjoyed sitting inside the canoe and “paddling.”

Houston area media also came out in force for the event, with every major Houston TV station taping news segments, as well as visits from the *Houston Chronicle*, *002 Magazine*, *Houston Family Magazine*, *Pasadena Citizen*, *Waller County News* and *Houston Press*. Additionally, articles appeared in dozens of weekly newspapers, many of them part of Houston Community Newspapers. Several radio stations ran promotional spots in advance.

BPA board member Terri Thomas was one of the event coordinators, having been involved in Mothers for Clean Air for several years. “We were thrilled with the response to our first Earth Day event,” she said.

“The fun run has been going on for a few years, but we wanted to turn this into something on a larger scale. By having BPA and many other environmental groups participate, it was an excellent way to educate the public about who these organizations are, what they do and how they help our eco-system. I appreciate all the volunteers who worked so hard to make this festival such a success. And I know next year will be even bigger and better.” ●



BPA Water Zone at the Earth Day Houston

“Eyes on the Bayou” Does Just That

In the activism role of its mission, the Bayou Preservation Association employs a grass-roots approach to respond to threats to our bayous and streams. Through its official “Eyes on the Bayou” scout, Eric Ruckstuhl, BPA monitors the health of Houston-area waterways along with the help of volunteer watershed representatives (Buffalo, White Oak, Brays, Greens bayous, Cypress Creek and many more). A strong presence in the field allows BPA to identify and act upon such hazards as habitat destruction, channel alterations, illegal dumping, other polluting activities, damage to bayou or their banks, accumulations of trash and logjams or other impediments to flow.

Ruckstuhl is down in the trenches, literally, on almost a daily basis, (either



Eric Ruckstuhl fighting the invasive exotics

singly or working with paid crews, Texas Department of Criminal Justice inmates or volunteers) hauling out trash, marking and removing invasive exotic plants, planting native species and removing logjams to make our bayous cleaner and safer.

Through trash pickup, invasive exotics removal and tree planting, the bayous benefit and the TDCJ inmates are able to be outdoors and learn about the environment. High school students and community volunteers (individuals and corporations) are also involved in stream restoration and clean-up projects throughout the year at Memorial Park, White Oak Bayou, Terry Hershey Park, Cypress Creek and other locations. This year, BPA’s Trash Bash™ 2009 at Terry Hershey Park also included “Plant Bash” along Langham Creek, where numerous invasive plants and trees were marked and removed.

Examples of recent Eyes on the Bayou projects/ accomplishments include:

- Created Buffalo Bayou paddle trail access and built a canoe launch at Highway 6.
- Removed 50 or more logjams between October and December 2008.

- Removed two navigational hazards at Dairy Ashford.
- Removed bicycle, 25 tires, including one 18-wheeler, 80 pounds of scrap metal, 100 – 39-gallon bags of litter.
- Planted 32 new native trees/plants near Highway 6 at Terry Hershey Park.
- Removed hundreds of invasive exotics from ½ mile area at Terry Hershey Park. (Invasive plant species are dangerous to native plants as they quickly reproduce in areas of unchecked growth and compete with natives that require similar habitats and may be in limited supply.)

Community volunteers removed invasive plants and trees, cleaned up trash and prepared Briar Bend Park for the April 28 Buffalo Bayou paddle trail dedication, while Ruckstuhl supervised Briar Bend Park restoration and the building of a canoe launch completed by Martin Simonton and his crew. (Unfortunately, the dedication was canceled due to storms/flooding.)

Ruckstuhl, assisted by Martin and his crew, also restored the county property on the south bank of Buffalo Bayou

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downstream of Voss and upstream of the Houston Country Club. This was a partnership with both Kerry Glen and Woodway Glen town homes and condos.

Following is a list of where to report damage to bayous or their banks, illegal dumping or other polluting activities, accumulations of trash, logjams or other

impediments to flow:

- City of Houston at 311
- Harris County Flood Control Service Center Hotline at 713.684.4197
- Harris County Environmental Crimes at 281.463.4619 or go to the Harris

Country Flood Control District web site.

Meanwhile, you can do your part by never putting trash or grass clippings down storm drains, reporting dumping, and getting involved in improving your watershed. ●

Trash Bash™ 2009 Brings Out the Volunteers

More than 300 volunteers came out to Terry Hershey Park on Saturday, March 28 sponsored by the BPA to “clean it like you mean it,” the slogan for Trash Bash™ 2009. People from toddlers to senior citizens joined forces on a chilly, but clear, morning to beautify the banks of the upper part of Buffalo Bayou between Highway 6 and Beltway 8 by removing all sorts of trash and debris. Canoes were on the water east of Highway 6 to assist with trash in the bayou.

Members of area boy and girl scout troops, along with high school students, donned work gloves to help out, including Memorial Mustang Outreach Bunch from Memorial High School and National Honor Society students from Stratford and Hastings high schools. Many employees of companies in the West Houston area gave a hand as well. Shuttle buses dropped volunteers off at six different sites for the three-hour clean-up. A small crew also helped with “plant bash,” removing invasive species near Langham Creek, led by BPA’s Eric Ruckstuhl.

Bruce Heiberg, BPA VP and Projects Committee chairman raved about the volunteer participation. “Everyone came out ready to work with a great attitude,” he said. “We were able to remove huge amounts of trash and educate people about

the importance of our bayous in the eco-system. Hopefully, people had a lot of fun along the way. I can’t say enough about my committee, especially Tom Powers and Robert Rayburn, who helped make this event so successful. The attention to detail was superb.”

The volunteers were treated to complimentary lunch and many stayed around to socialize and look at exhibits on display from the BPA, the Energy Corridor and the Native Plant Society. Trash Bash™ is an annual city-wide cleanup of bayous, rivers and bays coordinated by Houston-Galveston Area Council, which took place at 16 different sites this year.

Mark your calendars now for March 27, 2010 — the date of the next Trash Bash™! ●



Bruce Heiberg, BPA VP and Projects Committee Chairman

Buffalo Bayou Paddle Trail is Official

Perhaps the much-anticipated public dedication of the Buffalo Bayou Paddling Trail just wasn’t meant to be. After three tries, the planned dedication at Briar Bend Park did not happen, two times due to storms and flooding and once because of the public memorial service for two fallen Houston firefighters attended by Mayor White and other dignitaries.

Nonetheless, Buffalo Bayou has been designated as an official state paddling trail by the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department in Austin. The longest such trail in the state of Texas, Buffalo

Bayou offers an amazing canoe or kayak experience to paddlers with its nine segments totaling 26 miles, beginning at Highway 6 and flowing downstream to Allen’s landing downtown.

As part of TPWD’s Texas Paddling Trails network, the Buffalo Bayou Paddling Trail includes maintained put-in and take-out locations with interpretive information, safety tips, phone numbers and maps conveniently located in kiosks. There are nine segments of varying lengths to the paddle trail; some can be paddled in an hour, while others might take several hours. For example,

the segment from Briar Bend Park to Woodway/Memorial Park takes 3.5 to 4.5 hours, depending on water conditions.

“BPA is pleased to partner with Texas Parks & Wildlife, the City of Houston Parks and Recreation Department, Harris County and others to put Houston’s defining natural waterway in the spotlight as an official state paddle trail,” says BPA Board President Ty Kelly. “The Bayou Preservation Association was founded to preserve Buffalo Bayou as a natural stream and protect its

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amazing source of natural diversity of flora and fauna. The paddling trail will allow Houstonians and visitors to experience the hidden treasures of the Houston environment.”

“We want people to realize what a rich experience Buffalo Bayou offers, whether through paddling, hiking, bird watching or taking photographs,” he continues. “This designation brings much greater public awareness to the incredible asset that is right in our own backyard.”

BPA has worked with other organizations, including Buffalo Bayou Partnership, Harris County Flood Control District and the City of Houston, to help make Buffalo Bayou cleaner and safer by clearing out trash and debris on an ongoing basis, ridding its banks of invasive exotic plants and planting new natural species in their place.

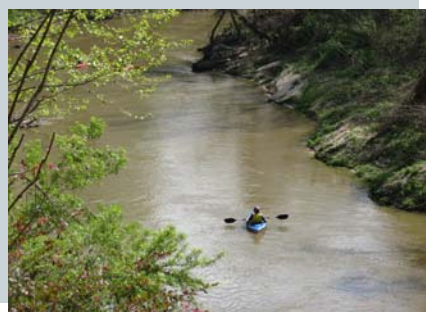
“In a state that’s about 94 percent privately owned, public waterways are

vitaly important,” says Carter Smith, TPWD executive director. “Designating this stretch of Buffalo Bayou as a paddling trail will help show people another side of Houston and afford them the opportunity to enjoy its natural beauty on the water. With the dedication of Buffalo Bayou, we now have 16 state paddle trails, eight inland and eight coastal, all of which provide excellent recreational experiences.”

Kelly noted that the Bayou Preservation Association emphasizes “safety first.” He says that if you are an inexperienced paddler, you might first go on an organized trip or with a guide. “Unexpected things can happen on any given float trip, and you should always be prepared by having the right equipment and communicating your ‘float plan’ to a trusted family member or friend. Check water conditions ahead of time. The paddle trails guide on the BPA web site www.bayoupreservation.org can be very helpful in planning a trip,” says Kelly. One should always wear a life jacket.

It’s also prudent to be on the lookout for logjams or “strainers” and be prepared to portage around them.

You can learn more about the Buffalo Bayou Paddling Trail and other trails on the BPA web site. We have a Paddle Trails Guide that can be printed for easy reference. However, it’s still important to always check conditions ahead of time, as our bayous are ever-changing. ●



Paddling on Buffalo bayou

Paddlers Work Hard, While Party-Goers Cheer Them On!

It was a cacophony of colors as some 300 canoes and kayaks made their way down Buffalo Bayou on March 7 for the 37th Annual Buffalo Bayou Regatta. Approximately 150 adults and 15 children gathered on the banks of Buffalo Bayou at the exquisite home of BPA board member Colleen Holthouse for “Breakfast on the Bayou” to cheer on the participants in this year’s race.

Sponsored by Buffalo Bayou Partnership, the Regatta is the largest canoe and kayak race in the State of Texas and attracts enthusiasts from Houston and beyond, who compete in the 15-mile USCA-sanctioned (United States Canoe Association) trip from San Felipe near Voss to Sesquicentennial Park next to the Wortham Center downtown.

Guests paid \$50 per person to attend the early morning, outdoor fund raiser, which netted more than \$9,800 for BPA. An Affaire Extraordinaire provided a lavish spread of tasty breakfast foods, along with juices, coffee and even Mimosas for those in the party mood early in the day. Party-goers of all ages were greeted by Colleen, who had the idea of providing “Super Soakers” (large water guns) for the children in the crowd. They thoroughly enjoyed the opportunity to spray the paddlers coming down the bayou, many of whom returned the favor by splashing the kids with their paddles. And the Irie Time Band upped the tempo with Caribbean jazz, reggae and calypso music.

The weather cooperated with warm, albeit humid, conditions, unlike the following Saturday when it turned cold and rainy. The party-goers loved walking the grounds of Colleen’s beautiful property, taking time to cheer on the Regatta participants, grab some tasty treats and mingle wit friends, old and new.

The Bayou Preservation Association appreciates the kind gesture of Colleen Holthouse hosting such a fun event and allowing guests to take in the beauty the Bayou has to offer. ●



Kids spraying the paddlers

Fleming's Earth Day Dinner Wins Rave Reviews

The Bayou Preservation Association was the fortunate recipient of the generosity of Fleming's Prime Steakhouse and Wine Bar in the new CityCentre development in West Houston with a private dinner held on Earth Day, April 22. The invitation to be a part of this evening was generated by public relations firm Studio Communications and Fleming's, which donated the entire cost of the food and wine. All proceeds from the evening, totaling \$3900, benefited BPA.



Fleming's Earth Day Dinner

The 75 guests for the event, which included board and staff members and new and potential donors, gathered at 6:30 p.m. for a wine reception with hors d'oeuvres. They were then seated for a fabulous four-course meal. After a shrimp appetizer came the wedge salad, followed by a choice of beef and seafood entrees served with potatoes and vegetables "family style." Even though everyone was completely stuffed, they managed to make room for the rich and decadent chocolate turtle dessert.

Before the dinner, BPA executive director Kathy Lord welcomed the guests and gave a brief overview. The new BPA brochure was available at each guest's place setting. Fleming's operating partner and general manager George Mlek mingled with all the attendees, while photographer Maryam Khalili snapped pictures for post-publicity purposes.

BPA would like to thank Fleming's Prime Steakhouse and Wine Bar and Studio Communications for allowing our organization to benefit from such a first-class event and to tell our story on Earth Day 2009. The food, ambience and service were superb! ●

All articles by Carol Brejot, BPA Public Relations Director

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Janice Van Dyke Walden, *Van Dyke Walden & Assoc.*
Don VanSickle, *Community Volunteer*
Marina Ballantyne Walne, *Community Volunteer*
Len Waterworth, *Dannenbaum Engineering Co.*
Carolyn White, *Harris County Flood Control District*

Advisory Board

Glenda Barrett, *Community Volunteer*
John R. Bartos, *Houston Canoe Club*
Mark Bowen, *Living Art Landscapes*
Glenda Callaway, *Ekistics Corporation*
Mary Carter, *Blackburn & Carter*
David Crossley, *Gulf Coast Institute*
Don Greene, *Whitewater Experience*
John S. Jacob, *TX Sea Grant/TX Coop. Ext.*
Harriet Latimer, *Development Consultant*
Jim Lester, *Houston Advanced Research Center*
Jennifer Lorenz, *Legacy Land Trust*
Council Member Sue Lovell, *City of Houston*
Elena Marks, *Mayor's Office*
Dorothy Martinez, *Natl. Flood Insurance Program*
Carl Masterson, *Houston-Galveston Area Council*
Alisa Max, *Harris County Watershed Protection Group*
S. Reed Morian, *DX Service Co.*
Roksan Okan-Vick, *Houston Parks Board*
Donna Phillips, *TX Comm. on Env. Quality, Reg. 12*
Mary Anne Piacentini, *Katy Prairie Conservancy*
Jim Pulliam, *Community Volunteer*
Commissioner Steve Radack, *Harris County*
Rob Rowland, *Parks/Gre. Space-Great. Ho. Part.*
Dick Smith, *Cypress Creek Flood Control Coalition*
Art Storey, *Harris Co. Public Infrastructure Dept.*
Mike Talbott, *Harris Co. Flood Control District*
Carla Wyatt, *Harris County Flood Control District*
Brenda Weiser, *Environmental Inst. of Houston*
Jarrett (Woody) Woodrow, Jr., *US Fish & Wildlife*

Watershed Representatives on the Board

Helen Hodges, *Armand Bayou*
 Vacant, *Brays Bayou*
Mike Garver, *Buffalo Bayou*
 Vacant, *Carpenter's Bayou*
J. Tynan Kelly, *Clear Creek*
Jim Robertson, *Cypress Creek*
Julie Masters, *Dickinson Bayou*
Bill Franks, *Greens Bayou*
Jennifer Dyke, *Halls Bayou*
Merrie Talley, *Hunting Bayou*
Joanna Friesen, *Sims Bayou*
Evelyn Born Shanley, *White Oak Bayou*

Past Presidents

Hugh Barrett
Bill Bradshaw
Don Greene
George Mitchell
David Parkhill
Don Sawtelle
Kevin Shanley
Frank C. Smith

Staff

Kathy Lord, *Executive Director*
Carol Brejot, *Public Relations Director*
Jennifer Hawkins, *Development Director*
Fred Lazare, *CPA*
Marina Gliha Rossow, *Exec. Assistant/
 Website Administrator*
Eric Ruckstuhl, *Eyes on the Bayou*