



All Your News from the Bayous

bpa bayou preservation association www.bayoupreservation.org

A Storey of Stewardship

At BPA's May 11 Annual Membership Meeting, Arthur (Art) Storey, P.E., Executive Director of Harris County Public Infrastructure Department, was named recipient of the first Terry Hershey Bayou Stewardship Award which "recognizes an individual or organization that shows exemplary commitment to and stewardship of a Houston-area bayou or bayous through conservation, preservation, restoration, advocacy or other proactive means." The award was presented by Mrs. Terry Hershey, a BPA board member and co-founder of the Bayou Preservation Association in 1966.

"Art Storey has been a friend to the Bayou Preservation Association and our bayou system during his 22-year career with Harris County," says Ty Kelly, BPA President. "He looks for innovative solutions to problems and had the vision of using flood damage reduction property to serve as both a detention basin and a recreational area for the communities surrounding Brays Bayou on the west side of Houston."



Harris County Flood Control District (HCFCD) began acquiring property along the upper reaches of Brays Bayou in the mid 1980s to construct stormwater detention basins that would safely store excess water during heavy rains. In a partnership between HCFCD and Precinct 3 Commissioner Steve Radack, the property was also designated as a county park with the name Brays Bayou Park. In 1997, the Harris County Commissioners Court approved changing the name to Arthur Storey Park.

Arthur Storey Park adds 210 acres of greenspace to the community and offers recreational and esthetic amenities, including jogging and nature trails, a tai chi court, picnic areas, a playground and meeting areas. It has become home to dozens of species of coastal and migratory birds.

Art Storey is a member of the board of the Jacob and Terese Hershey Foundation, which financially supports wildlife, parks and the natural environment. He is a graduate of Rice University and was named a Distinguished Alumnus of Rice.

Approximately 100 people attended the BPA's second Annual Membership Meeting at the home of Ty and Lynn Kelly. The meeting was a fun mix of business and social time for BPA board members, staff and supporters, who were excited to see Art Storey honored for his commitment to the environment. •



The 8th annual world class professional symposium—

**Water Quality Stewardship:
The Past, Present and Future State of our Water Quality**

Earth Day 2011 is a Huge Hit Thanks to Our Partners



The Bayou Preservation Association's (BPA) Water Zone at Air Alliance Houston Earth Day 2011 at Discovery Green Park on April 23 was a huge hit among attendees, especially the canoe and kayak rides in the "lake," a collaboration between BPA and Bayou Shuttle Service. At least 220 children experienced the fun of a short "paddle trip," along with several young-at-heart adults.

The event proved to be an excellent example of a partnership among many individuals and organizations to educate the public about our most precious natural resource and its role in our lives in Houston.

Other "hot" activities and exhibits in the Water Zone on this warm spring day included:

- A diorama highlighting plant and animal life near the bayous
- Two watershed models to demonstrate how oil, fertilizer and trash wash into the bayous, causing pollution. (Created by Westside High School Environmental Science Club students under the direction of teacher Lawrence Spence)
- A map called "Which Watershed Do You Live In?" where you stick a push pin in your watershed location
- A rain barrel with instructions on how to make compost tea
- A display board with a sample of pervious pavement
- "Decomposing Game" where you guess how long it takes different items to decompose or disintegrate in the environment
- Watershed map puzzles and displays showing stormwater runoff by Harris County Flood Control District
- Rain gauge race organized by University of Houston faculty and students
- "Corral the Grease" game sponsored by City of Houston with fun giveaways
- Educational displays and information from Linda Knowles representing the Native Plant Society

Many thanks go to our partners at Earth Day 2011, (Harris County Flood Control, City of Houston, the University of Houston) as well as several BPA board members and staff who were instrumental in making the Water Zone one of the most outstanding attractions of the day. These include Bette Leite, Kevin Shanley, Evelyn Shanley, Lawrence Spence, Claire Caudill, Terri Thomas, Jennifer Hawkins, Kathy Lord, Marina Rossow, and Steve Hupp. •



BPA is a member of Earth Share Texas. Through a payroll deduction program, Earth Share offers employers and employees interested in environmental issues the opportunity to support the BPA.



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Where shopping carts go to die ...

Where the Bering Ditch flows into Buffalo Bayou east of Voss Road, shopping carts gather in a "graveyard" where some have been buried since the mid-90s or longer. The carts were either tossed or swept into the drainage ditch on the densely populated southwest side and made their way down to the bayou with stormwater runoff, creating visual blight, impeding water flow and presenting a hazard to paddlers. Although Harris County Flood Control personnel had removed up to 40 carts, many more remained, until BPA stepped in.



Photo courtesy of Rusty Graham, Memorial Examiner

On February 28, under the direction of BPA's Eric Ruckstuhl and contractor Martin Simonton, a crew worked to remove approximately 20 more carts, many of which were buried in the sand and difficult to extract. This project created quite a media stir, with coverage by KTRK-TV, ABC-Ch. 13; KHOU-TV, CBS-Ch. 11; and KRIV-TV, Fox-Ch. 26, as well as lengthy articles in the *Houston Chronicle* and the *Memorial Examiner*. The media exposure supports BPA's goal of education by showing consumers what happens when trash ends up in our bayous.

In addition to the shopping cart project, students from Geoffrey Brooks' AP Physics class at Second Baptist School removed trash and debris from Buffalo Bayou in collaboration with BPA and Bayou Shuttle Service, which provided kayaks and three canoes for trash. The service project clean-up took place from February 28 – March 4 and is greatly appreciated by the Bayou Preservation Association. •

Paddle Trips Benefit BPA Programs

A series of spring and summer Buffalo Bayou paddle trips organized by Bayou Shuttle Service and benefiting Bayou Preservation Association (BPA), began in April and continues with trips on June 11, June 25, July 9 and July 30. Part of the \$60 fee for the trip supports BPA projects and programs that improve the bayou. All trips are at 2 p.m. and begin at the Woodway launch on Buffalo Bayou near Interstate 610, continuing downstream to the Sabine take-out near downtown Houston. Known as the "Houston Skyline Tour," the kayak journey offers spectacular views of Houston that can only be seen below street level and takes about two to three hours, depending on water conditions.

"We had three successful paddle trips in the fall, netting \$3,265 for BPA," says Kathy Lord, BPA's Executive Director. "This has been an incredibly beneficial partnership due to the generosity of Rico Torres, president of Bayou Shuttle. The goal for 2011 is to raise at least \$10,000 for our organization. With the popularity of these trips, it should be attainable."



Bayou Shuttle Service provides kayaks and transportation to and from the put-in point at Woodway. The firm's personnel who lead the trips are trained in CPR and first aid and provide a historical and educational narration about Buffalo Bayou along the way. You can register and pay for the paddle trip of your choice online at www.bayoushuttle.com/tours/BPA.htm. Paddlers meet at City Parking Lot H at 110 Sabine Street at 1:30 p.m. and will be shuttled to the put-in point. Spaces are limited. •

Trash Bash® Continues to Set Records

Nearly 650 volunteers came out to Terry Hershey Park on Cypress Creek to "clean it like you mean it," which were records for both Trash Bash® 2011 sites sponsored by BPA. People from toddlers to senior citizens joined forces on a warm, breezy day to beautify the upper banks of Buffalo Bayou between Highway 6 and Beltway 8 and along Cypress Creek by removing trash and debris.



Shuttle buses dropped volunteers off at six different sites along at Terry Hershey Park for the three-hour clean up. A crew also helped with removal of invasive, exotic plant species near Langham Creek, under the direction of BPA Water Quality Director Steve Hupp. Troop 1089 unearthed several large pieces of metal that had been illegally dumped years ago to clear the way for planting native species. High school students, church groups and other interested individuals donned work gloves to do their part for Buffalo Bayou and Langham Creek, in addition to volunteers from three Super Neighborhoods. At Collins Park and along Cypress Creek, nearly three tons of trash were collected, much of it coming from near the Kickerillo-Mischer Preserve and the YMCA at Highway 249. In addition to trash removal, a crew of about 15 volunteers assisted BPA's Eric Ruckstuhl in removing invasive exotic plants around Collins Park, which had been previously paint-marked by Ruckstuhl.

After the clean-up effort, volunteers were treated to hot dogs, chips, drinks and cookies, along with fun, educational displays. Kudos go to Terry Hershey Park site chairman Bruce Heiberg and Collins Park co-chairmen Tom Powers and Jim Robertson, all BPA board members. They rallied the troops for the most successful BPA Trash Bash® events to date. •

It's a Jungle on the Bayou

Jungle fever will be sweeping the Houston area Wednesday, October 12 for the Bayou Preservation Association's annual fundraising event, *Welcome to the Jungle*.

Penny and Paul Loyd have generously offered their exquisite Memorial home on Buffalo Bayou for the party, which is chaired by Jessica and Peto Meyer and Kristen and Lee Nix. Guests will go bananas over the evening's festivities, which promise delectable food, fun entertainment and plenty of time for mingling and taking in the bayou views.



It's a jungle down there . . . did you know that the local bayou and estuarine systems produce as much primary plant material as the tropical rainforest? Funds raised through this annual event provide the BPA with the resources it needs to keep the concrete jungle at bay.

Don't monkey around. You won't want to miss one of the best parties of the fall season. Underwriting opportunities are available beginning at \$2,500, while individual tickets cost \$200. Contact Jennifer Hawkins at 713-506-5505 or by e-mail at jcathawk@aol.com. You can also visit us on the web at www.bayoupreservation.org/2011_Gala. •