



BRAZOS BEND BUNCH BUGLE

VOLUME 20, NUMBER 11

NOVEMBER 2008

PRESIDENT'S CORNER



Big thanks to **Anna Dell Williamson** and her committee for organizing our annual volunteer picnic. It was so great to see friends who volunteer on days that I am not at the park. We do, however, need a larger building to gather in!

What great news when **Justin Rhodes**, our Regional Director, announced that Brazos Bend would get a new recreation center. We are probably all anxiously awaiting the details!

Aren't you proud when you repeatedly hear of the great reputation our volunteer organization has? Both Justin and **Steve Killian** conveyed this to us at the picnic. The Katy Prairie has recently formed a volunteer organization, and I was told they want to model their organization after ours.

Behind every great organization are their leaders. We could not ask for any better leaders than **David Heinicke** and **Sharon Hanzik**. They always make us feel so appreciated and support any ideas that we may have. They enable us to find our own 'niche' in our volunteer system. I believe each of you brings a unique aspect to the park. I'm so glad that I can be a part of this.

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PRESIDENT'S CORNER, *Continued*

Also, a big thanks goes out to **Glen Kilgore** for writing our new program for the volunteer store and training the volunteers. This program seems to be very user friendly (Maybe I won't be making so many mistakes now!). A special thanks to **Jenn Mantei** for her work on our newsletter. Jenn does the layouts, finds pictures for articles, writes the volunteer profiles and also does the ID Quiz. She has certainly enriched our newsletter!

On the 'birdy' side of things our winter birds are presently arriving. Eastern Phoebes have arrived and seem to be very proud of this, since their voices seemed to be everywhere last weekend. They sound like they are saying 'phoebe'. They are part of the group of flycatchers. They will perch on a branch, swoop after a flying insect, and return back to their perch. They are dark gray on top and lighter gray on the bottom. They have a nervous habit of flicking their tail when perched.



The picture of the phoebe was taken by **Will Rountree**, who makes his rounds of nature areas capturing wildlife in photos. He made a recent posting on Texbirds of pictures that he took at Brazos Bend. He has given me permission to use his pictures for presentations at the park.

Doesn't this weather make you want to call in sick and get out to the park?!

OCTOBER MEETING NOTES

by Anna Dell Williamson

A very short October meeting was held at the annual volunteer picnic. Vice-President **Anna Dell Williamson** presided. Since the September meeting was cancelled by Hurricane Ike, there was no confirmation of the election of officers. It was moved, seconded and passed that we accept the following slate: President, **Carrie Sample**; Vice-President, **Suzie Gann**; Secretary, **Eddy Grizzaffi**, and Treasurer, **Diane Carpenter**. After a few thank-you's and brief announcements, the meeting was adjourned.

After the meeting, annual service and special recognition awards were presented by **Sharon Hanzik**. See the list elsewhere in the newsletter.

Part of the picnic was spent in remembering those members that we've lost during the past year. Following is a memorial statement written by **Bruce Williamson**:

Brian Leach. Judy Huber. Ken Debenport. These three people had some things in common. All three of them enjoyed visiting Brazos Bend State Park. They all decided to give something back to the park and to the park visitors. They all enjoyed their involvement in the Volunteer Organization. And they all made belonging to the Volunteer Organization more fun for the rest of us. I want to thank their families for sharing them with the rest of us, and I am very happy to be able to say that they were my friends.

SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER MAINTENANCE REPORT

by Ron Morrison

Wood Yard:

Split wood

Equipment Maintenance:

Updated service and maintenance records on all equipment
Took equipment needing maintenance out of use until service is updated
Met with **Larry Sample** regarding maintenance work on equipment
Serviced the John Deere Tractor, Gator 06 and Gator 07
Performed yearly maintenance on the wood splitter
Replaced a broken engine coupler on the wood splitter
Fixed flat tires on the Gator 06 and both wheelbarrows
Dropped off and picked up the Stihl 036 chainsaw from service
Sharpened six chainsaw blades



Trail Maintenance:

Trimmed and chipped one-half mile of the Red Buckeye trail

Special Projects:

Hurricane Ike cleanup: Assisted staff with cleanup on Hoots Hollow, 40-Acre Lake, Hale Lake
Cleaned out the volunteer maintenance shed
Installed a shelving unit in the volunteer maintenance shed
Delivered seven boxes of outdated records for shredding

CAN YOU IDENTIFY THESE “DADDY LONGLEGS”?



“Daddy Longlegs” — a common name for three different animals. Which one is a spider? Which one is an insect? What is the other one? Answers are on page 7. Many thanks to **Chuck DuPlant** for contributing the photos and identification information for this month’s Quiz. So far no one has ventured a guess at identifying the fungi from last month’s quiz – e-mail your responses to jmantei@earthlink.net.

ANNUAL PICNIC & AWARDS CEREMONY

The Volunteer Organization annual picnic was held October 11 at the Banquet Hall. Over 100 volunteers, park hosts and family members attended. The annual organization photograph was taken before the picnic and is now posted in the Nature Center over the Guest Register. Check it out. After a wonderful meal, **Sharon Hanzik** presented the service awards and special recognition awards:

SERVICE AWARDS:

5 years: **Doug DeVries**
 Marilyn Vossler

15 years: **Nicole Olsen**

SPECIAL RECOGNITION:

Teamwork: Eco Explorers Team:
 Carrie Sample
 Eddy Grizzaffi
 Patricia Marshall
 Suzie Gann
 Pam Tatge
 Bill Godley
 Tom Prentiss
 Jaci Elliott
 Diane Carpenter
 Jerry Carpenter

Education: **Jean Northington**

Excellence: **Diane Carpenter**

Newsletter: **Jenn Mantei**

Emeritus: **Rita Cooper**
 Dennis Keprta

Customer **Teresa Jones**
Service: **Jerry Zona**

Leadership: **Ron Morrison**

MEETING NIGHT SUPPERS

Please remember that we need someone to sign up to bring suppers for the monthly meetings. With your receipts, you will be reimbursed for the cost of the meal up to a certain amount. The signup is on our Volunteer Calendar. Please call Judy Strauss or Anna Dell Williamson if you have any questions. Thank you! We appreciate your help.

AN INVITATION

from Laszlo Perlaky

The latest photo exhibition, "Birds of Oyster Shell Island," opened October 24 at the Fill Your Cup Coffee House, 1410 Highway 90A, Richmond. It will run through December 19, and all are welcome to come see the photos exhibited by Laurent Gresson, Edward Habgood, Jaimie Ladysh, Lexi Nemeth and **Laszlo Perlaky**.

NATURE CENTER REPORT SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER, 2008

by Anna Dell Williamson

Here is a breakdown of the various activities and attendance recorded for the Nature Center, hikes, and programs for September and October, 2008. Hurricane Ike forced park closure from September 10 to October 10. Breakdown is for October only. Thanks, David, for the September numbers.

	2008	SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER
NATURE CENTER Total September (9 days) 1386 Total October (21 days) 3759	SATURDAYS OCT (3)	1744 High, 703, 10/25
	SUNDAYS OCT (3)	1271 High, 472, 10/26
	WEEKDAYS OCT (15)	744 High, 120, 10/27
	CREEKFIELD HIKES (3/8)	59/170 High, 101, 10/18
	ALLIGATOR PROGRAMS (2/3)	108/57 High, 35, 10/18
	BIRD PROGRAMS, HIKES (2/3)	33/67 High, 51, 10/18
	SNAKE PROGRAMS (1/3)	18/77 High, 34, 10/19
	CHILDREN'S STORY TIME (2/5)	17/126 High, 42, 10/25
	OUTREACH (Texian Market Days)	2276
	OTHER PROGRAMS (9) includes "Armadillo", "Bees", Ask the Ranger, "Munch & Crunch", "Pondlife", hikes	38/159

OUTREACH REPORT

by Judy Strauss

I want to thank all of you so much for your help with Texian Market Days at the George Ranch. We had beautiful weather, and we all had a great time.

On Friday, the activities were open to school children. Most of our visitors were around middle school age and were really fun and full of questions. Our Burr Oak Acorns were re-named "Man Oak" Acorns, because, as I was told, they are big and strong! We had a lot of fun with these children! We saw 975 children and adults on Friday before closing around 2:30. Thank you to **Jerry Carpenter, Susie Gann, Dave Armstrong, Doris Dahse, Ray Anderson,** and **Carrie Sample** for helping on Friday.

On Saturday TMD was open to the public. We counted 1301 visitors to our booth, many of whom frequent the park, and many that had never visited before. A big thank you to **Jerry Zona, Ray Anderson, Jim North, Bruce Williamson, Anna Dell Williamson, Jane Minard, Doris Dahse, Nancy and Jennet Bertmeyer, Ron Dearman, Cindy Peterson,** and **Maureen Goode** for your help on Saturday.

I would also like to thank **Offie Walker** and **Dave Armstrong** for helping David and myself with the set-up Thursday evening. We were able to get the tent up in a very short time. Thanks, David, for finding a way to "rig" the broken tent pole so that we could use the tent. (On that note, please, if you break something, let someone know so it can be repaired or replaced before the next event. To just leave it for the next person to find, and pretend that it never happened makes it very difficult, if not impossible, for the next

group to use for their event.) Lastly, a big thank you to **Ron Dearman** for the use of his truck to carry the tent box back to the park, and to **Johnny Hite** for helping with the tear-down.

The staff of the Fort Bend Museum and the George Ranch were very appreciative of our being a part of TMD. They were extremely helpful and went all-out to make our visit enjoyable. The event was very successful and our presence there could not have happened without all of the help I received. THANK YOU ALL SO MUCH!

A SIMPLE CHRISTMAS

by Sharon Hanzik



In a little more than a month we will be hosting our 11th annual Simple Christmas event, on Saturday, December 6, between 3 and 7 p.m. Below are descriptions of the jobs we need filled by volunteers. If you have anything else you'd like to do for the public let me know SOON - and keep it SIMPLE. The event flyer is posted on the web under the coming events.

PLEASE LET ME KNOW IF YOU WANT TO HELP WITH ANY OF THE FOLLOWING:

DECORATORS FOR HAY RIDE TRAILER(S)

Trailers need to be decorated with garland, lights, and hay. Meet at Nature Center at 10:00 a.m. Last year we used only one trailer and it worked out fine. Can't have everyone on hayrides for the entire time.

DECORATORS FOR NATURE CENTER

Decorate building, deck and amphitheater with lights and garland. Set up tables for refreshments. Bring fire ring and firewood from wood yard. Haul picnic tables under pecan tree. Fill luminaria sacks with sand and candles to be set out on amphitheater walk at 5:00

HAYRIDE RIDE-ALONG DUTY

One volunteer is needed for each trailer for safety reasons. We need you to ride along as long as hay rides are wanted between the hours of 3:00 and 7:00. You will stamp every hand that gets on. One ride per person.

REFRESHMENT DUTY

We need people to make and serve hot-chocolate and wassail, serve cookies/crackers (store-bought or home-made). We have a budget for this.

MARSHMALLOW ROASTING

Need people to keep an eye on fire and keep order, and to supply marshmallows to the public. You will stamp every hand that makes a s'more (one s'more per person).

CHILDREN'S STORY TIME

"Christmas for the Birds" – help Carrie Sample make bird feeders and stringers for Christmas bird feeder tree. Carrie will need assistance with helping children make bird feeders and stringing popcorn stringer feeders for the bird feeding Christmas tree.

VOLUNTEER NEWS & NOTES



. . . to **Larry Sample** - for help with equipment maintenance

. . . to **Judy Strauss** for coordinating the volunteer effort for Texian Market Days. See her helpers listed in the Outreach report.

. . . from **Jennifer and Curtis Parent** — a special thanks to **Bill Godley** for sharing his knowledge of birding and enthusiasm for the Park on October 25, when he guided a hike for our "city folk" friends! A great time was had by all. Especially good job on providing the perfect weather. Thanks, Bill!



NOVEMBER BIRTHDAYS:

Ray Anderson
Nelda Gay
David Heinicke (Staff)
Linda Hite
Steve Killian (Staff)
Patricia Marshall
Curtis Parent
Terry Williamson

DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS:

Robert Aaron
Beth Debenport
Jeff Orsak (Staff)
Frank Willett



DECEMBER ANNIVERSARIES:

Jenn & Alan Mantei (16 Years)

Identification Quiz Answers (from page 3):

Spider? Photo A is the spider. Commonly called a Daddy Longlegs or Cellar Spider. Usually found in dark corners of houses and cellars. Others live in dry areas such as under debris or stones. Though humans have been bitten, there is no documentation of a venomous bite.

Insect? Photo C is the insect. Commonly referred to as a Crane Fly or Mosquito Hawk in our area. If you search the web for "Daddy Longlegs", this will show up in the results along with the other two.

Other? Picture B is a Harvestman. These can be found under the eaves and on exterior walls of buildings in Brazos Bend. Commonly called "Daddy Longlegs" and said to be the most venomous of spiders – however, it's fangs are not long enough to enter our skin. It is kin to spiders but is not one, and has no fangs or venom. It does secrete an odor that prevents it being eaten. – **Chuck DuPlant**

GEORGE OBSERVATORY WINS 2008 IAD AWARD

by Barbara Wilson, George Observatory

The Houston Museum of Natural Science's **George Observatory**, along with the Astronomical Society of South East Texas, Fort Bend Astronomy Club, Houston Museum of Natural Science, Houston Astronomical Society, JSC Astronomical Society and North Houston Astronomy Club won the 2008 International Astronomy Day Award, which includes a cash reward and plaques which will be displayed here at the observatory.

This competition is held each year across the US and the rest of the world. The Astronomy Day award is given by Sky and Telescope Magazine in cooperation with the Astronomical League once a year in recognition of success in "bringing Astronomy to the People." The 2007 Astronomy Day was attended by 4000 visitors last October, our largest attendance to date, with over 140 volunteers working to make this day a huge success.

This year's 2008 event was Saturday October 18, and we may have had more visitors than 2007, but the official count of people is not in yet. Unofficially the count is 4254.

Here are two links you might find interesting:

2007 and 2008 Astronomy Days: <http://astronomyday.org/>

News article with pictures: <http://www.skyandtelescope.com/news/27124279.html>

We Get Letters..



We visited the park the weekend of October 25. Our Cub Scout Pack camped overnight Friday and Saturday. On Saturday we chose to take the boys to the Nature Center for the Nature Walk 'n Talk. I just wanted to say how great our volunteer Ranger was. He was cheerful, full of great information and interesting tidbits, and he was not phased by the 13 wiggling boys and the 19 other parents and siblings. We were a large group and he kept us together and on task. One of our Dad's got a great picture of our volunteer.

The volunteers inside the Nature Center (story teller, corn snake and baby alligator) were also great with our guys. It was a very enjoyable visit, and I am confident our Pack will be back.

Say thank you to our volunteer Ranger. We really appreciated our walk with him.

Sincerely,

Danika LaBrant, Secretary

Cub Scout Pack 1624

http://cubpack1624.clubspaces.com/default_css.aspx



Jerry Carpenter



BRAZOS BEND BUTTERFLY COUNT

by Rich and Sandy Jespersen

The Thirteenth Annual Brazos Bend Butterfly Count was delayed for three weeks as a result of Hurricane Ike. Brazos Bend State Park was closed for almost a month by downed trees and the lack of power and water. We were finally able to hold the count on October 12, and it turned out to be a great day. The weather was perfect, we had an outstanding participant turnout, and 54 species of butterflies were sighted including several not seen on prior counts.

The three inches of rain brought by the hurricane of September 12 was the only significant precipitation in the eight weeks preceding count day. Nevertheless, there were abundant wildflowers in bloom and neither the dry conditions nor the hurricane winds had significant impact on butterfly numbers.

Our nineteen observers divided into six parties and spent the day scouring the various habitats within and near the park. The Black Swallowtail, previously seen on every count, was the only "regular" missing from this year's results. There were record numbers of nine species (Southern Dogface, Gray Hairstreak, Red-banded Hairstreak, Dusky-blue Groundstreak, American Snout, Gulf Fritillary, Painted Lady, Queen and Ocola Skipper) and four new species were seen (White Angled Sulphur, Orange-barred Sulphur, Large Orange Sulphur and Yehl Skipper). Totals: 1698 individuals / 54 species.

Observers were **Janet Clemenson, Chuck Duplant, Tad Finnel, Bill Godley, Rich & Sandy Jespersen, Don Johnson, Diane Milano, Diana Morrison, Jim Murphy, Warren Pruess, Bill & Lynne Ray, John Schneider, Susan Severance, James Smith, Pam Tatge, Walter Ulrich and Hugh Wedgeworth.**

24th ANNUAL CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT

by Bill Godley

On Saturday, December 20, we will conduct our 24th Christmas Bird Count in and around Brazos Bend State Park. This wonderful event, over 100 years old in our nation, has seen great success over its history. **David Heinicke** and others have made this an exciting event for over 20 years at our park. I extend this personal invitation to each of you to participate. You will be showing your support for the park and the environment, having a great time and enjoying plenty to eat at its conclusion. And who knows, you may see a rare bird or two!

The CBC count circle covers nearly 175 square miles, from Damon to the Parish Power Plant to the Brazos River. Areas outside the park are generally assigned to participants familiar with those areas for several years. Our needs are for support within the park, nearly 10 square miles itself. I you can spend a full day with us, terrific! If not, consider a half day of fun and you will no doubt be hooked for years to follow. And if you wish to work outside the park, we can meet that need as well.

Skill level needs? Not important! If you can hear, see, and have a vivid imagination, anything is possible! Boom boxes, running, waving and screaming "Ivory-billed Woodpecker," is frowned-upon. All teams will have qualified leaders, so not to worry. While you may prefer not to commit now and instead be a "walk-on" at the Nature Center the morning of the event, an email to me now will help in my planning: fribbish@msn.com. See the CBC flyer available from our website home page (www.brazosbend.org) and let me know if you have questions. I hope to hear from you. It's your park!

WHAT'S IN THE GARDEN?

By Joan Jackson

Gulf Coast Penstemon

Penstemon tenuis



Gulf Coast or Brazos Penstemon is a beautiful addition to your garden. It is evergreen with blooming masses of pink-purple one-inch flowers on two-and-a-half foot stalks in early spring. Sometimes it will bloom again in fall. It produces many seeds which are easily propagated. Poor drainage is not a problem for this plant since it likes damp areas. It will grow in full sun if watered, but prefers partial shade. It is native to areas near the Gulf and up into Arkansas.

The planting in our Butterfly-Hummingbird Garden can be found in the large flower bed in the front of the Nature Center, toward the air conditioner enclosure.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

November 27	Thanksgiving (NC open week before and Friday after, 9-5)
December 1-4	Deer Hunt
December 6	Simple Christmas, 3:00 - 7:00 PM
December 13	Regular meeting, 5:30 PM

2009

January 10	Regular meeting, 5:30 PM
January 19	Martin Luther King Day Holiday
February 14	Regular meeting, 5:30 PM
February 16	President's Day Holiday



REMEMBERING KEN



Ed. Note: Our long-time volunteer and very good friend **Ken Debenport** passed away on Tuesday, September 23, 2008. Following are remembrances from some of the volunteers and staff.



Friday, September 26, was my first day back to Brazos Bend State Park since the passing of Hurricane Ike; it was also the visitation day of our dear friend Ken Debenport. With only a work crew of about half a dozen guys over at Hale Lake and a few other folks up at the park headquarters, the place was incredibly people-quiet and creature-cacophonous, an ideal time for me to reflect upon Mr. Ken's unofficial mentorship to me and so many others who made visiting the park on Sundays a part of their unconventional Sabbath sanctuary.

As a mid-western twenty-year transplant to Texas, I never felt more adaptable to following the southern tradition of placing a *Mister* or *Miss* in front of the first names of those a generation ahead of me as I did when addressing the respectable Ken and Beth Debenport. I suppose I saw Mr. Ken and Miss Beth as two compatible live oaks, symbiotic in their support of each other. When Miss Beth faced oncoming crowds in the Gift Shop, Mr. Ken accounted for the shop's cash in the back office. When Mr. Ken would handle baby alligators and explain to bug-eyed children that, "Yes, they have teeth, and yes, they can bite, but their tiny teeth can't break the skin," Miss Beth might have been training a new VIT in the Gift Shop.

A bean counter by trade, Mr. Ken was efficient and sharp as a *tactful* teacher. He never hesitated to tell rambunctious young cyclists to keep their bikes off the deck around the oak tree at the Nature Center, and last year at their luncheon, he advised the new VIT members to be careful on the roads coming out to the park, as there were some "crazy and careless drivers" out there (and after which we joked about those pep-raising pearls of wisdom to our newcomers). Ken Debenport could be counted on to say what needed to be said in a meeting, and if you couldn't remember a point you wanted to make, chances are Mr. Ken – man of a steel trap mind – would remember for you.

I knew that if I had waited until the day before to sign up for a designated duty, I could always ask Mr. Ken to let me work in the wood yard. And, as always, he would have a detailed plan for me to follow when I got down there. He'd say: "Take the unbundled from the back and fill in as you go...don't skimp; make sure you give them what they pay for...and watch out for snakes." I'd say: "Great advice for living, Mr. Ken. Oh, and I'll turn the radio on and keep it nearby." Just one more thing: the next time you check out a walkie-talkie, take a look at the brand name. It couldn't be more fitting: KENWOOD. – **Jaci Elliott**



I am so saddened to hear of Ken's passing. I know how he loved the park and cared about the volunteer organization. I will surely miss his wit and wisdom. I will always remember my mind's picture of him as he would be sitting on a stool before the aquarium sharing with a child the wonder of the alligator which he would be holding at the time. His selfless giving nature was a wonderful model for us all. As one of the newer volunteers, Ken was open to answering my questions. He was an invaluable source of information for me. He will truly be missed. God bless the Debenport family in this time of their tremendous loss. – **Frank Seay**



It is a certainty that one day a person will leave this life and move on. Even though it is a certainty, when the inevitable happens it still hurts. **Ken Debenport** has left us. One-half of a stalwart team, Ken will no longer represent Brazos Bend as we've been accustomed to. Ken will no longer present an alligator to the public, thrilling both children and adults from all over the world. Ken will no longer perform the other tasks that have benefitted the park. Goodbye Ken, and thank you. You will be sorely missed. – **Jerry Zona**



At work on Monday, September 29, I was walking between buildings when I heard a raspy, flapping noise. A large Green Darner dragonfly was lying upside-down on the ground under a Jeep. I bent to pick it up. When my hand got near it, the dragonfly began beating its wings, but since it was upside-down it just rattled on the ground like a broken rubber-band glider. Taking care not to damage the wings, I gently picked it up. It grabbed my finger, and I slowly began to stand while trying to right the dragonfly. Before I got it "wings up", it took off, made a loop, and crashed back into the ground.

I picked the dragonfly up again, but this time held onto it and placed it so it could stand on the palm of my hand. As I slowly raised my flattened palm above the roof of the jeep, the dragonfly flew off into the distance. As it flew, I heard Ken laugh. This was the kind of natural sight that Ken would find amusing, the kind of story he might tell. But as I continued to consider the dragonfly, I thought of something more.

If someone who loved nature and people had reached their final reward, and they could do whatever they wanted from that point on, what would they do? Would they check on people they knew? What if they could do it through the critters they loved? What if they could "hitch a ride" in a critter for a while?

Suppose that on that afternoon that person wanted to try flying in a dragonfly. How do you suppose that first flight would be? I reckon it would take some practice before flight was as effortless as a dragonfly makes it look. Suppose they wanted to buzz by someone they knew – me, for instance – and instead of a complicated aerial ballet, they just landed upside down? No harm done, just "Oops, that's not what I meant to do!" Then someone – like me – would pick them up and set them right so they could fly off into the wind laughing.

I turned back and squinted off in the direction the dragonfly had flown. I smiled and gave a small wave, and in a quiet voice I said, "Fly on, Ken." – **Rick Dashnau**



Ken had a rare ability to instruct without seeming to do so. His touch was so light as to be almost imperceptible, via casual conversation laced with dust-dry humor and a deep respect for the give and take of orderly interchange. It took me a long while, as a new volunteer in 2007, to recognize just how much education there was to harvest from conversations with him. He'd wander up to the front desk of the Nature Center and rest an elbow on the counter like a mellowed old cowboy just coming in off the trail, say his how-dee-dos to all of us there, and gather the tenor of the conversation. Then he'd join in, tossing in a comment, an observation, a wry little joke, listening more than he talked, and weighing everyone's words generously.

The content of his conversation was always intelligent; but it was the way he conversed that I now find so inspiring. Though he possessed authority, he never pressed it. He didn't muscle his views around or push his scholarship in your face. His equanimity of mind was contagious. After talking to Ken for a while, I always felt mysteriously buoyed up, smarter, and more generous myself. How did he do it? I'm still trying to figure it out – which means I'm still learning from Ken. – **Staci Hobbet**



My Artist Statement to my new "Wabi-Sabi" portfolio pamphlet inner page contains the dedication to our missed friend, Ken. The portfolio was juried at the Houston Photographic Society, presented at the Bayou City Art Festival and will be on view at the Fill Your Cup Coffee Shop Gallery in Richmond starting in mid December. – **Laszlo Perlaky**



Thanks to Ken Debenport, I will never forget the first day I spent tying firewood. After showing me around a bit and explaining where to start, Ken became serious and instructed me to be cautious of snakes who like to hide in the stacks of logs. He'd brought along his snake catching bucket and told me several stories of capturing and relocating copperheads he'd found in the wood yard.

As we worked and talked, Ken told me many stories of his years at the park and his life in Texas. Half an hour or so into our work, I picked up a log and spotted what looked like a ribbon snake stretched out in a crevice in the log underneath. I pointed it out to Ken, who leaned over to take a closer look. He agreed that it looked like a ribbon snake – and no sooner were the words out of his mouth than the “snake” jumped onto his shirt! I will never forget the startled look on his face as he jumped back and danced around while trying to brush the snake off his shirt. When it hit the ground, we both discovered that the “snake” was not a snake at all, but a skink, which made a mad dash for cover under one of the pallets. Ken and I both breathed an audible sigh of relief.

Ken was an inspiring teacher and mentor. He was often my go-to guy whenever I needed information, and was ever willing to help. I'll always remember what I've come to regard as the “Skink Incident”. Thank you, Ken, for a wonderful memory and for being an inspiration to us all. – **Jenn Mantei**



KEN-ISMS

Ken Debenport was not only a natural history interpreter, he was also very good at interpreting a particular situation, predicament, or emotion. Here are some of his best “Ken-isms”. May they live on and on. – **Sharon Hanzik**

“Too windy to haul rocks.”

“Funny as a train wreck.” (i.e., not very funny!)

“Like a chicken on a spit.” (Unable to sit still)

“Dumb as a hammer.”

“Whatever melts your butter.” (i.e., whatever makes you happy)

“Fits like socks on a rooster.” (i.e., not a good fit)

“Neck deep to a gee-raf.”

What you may refer to as a “pick stick” was also referred to by Ken as a “spike pole”.

Brazos Bend State Park

Texas Parks and Wildlife
21901 FM 762
Needville TX 77461

FIRST CLASS MAIL

→ **NEXT MEETING DAY AND TIME** ←

SATURDAY, November 8, 5:30 PM



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:	Carrie Sample
Vice-President:	Suzie Gann
Secretary:	Eddy Grizzaffi
Treasurer:	Diane Carpenter

NEWSLETTER TEAM

Editor:	Anna Dell Williamson
Layout:	Jenn Mantei
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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). Notify Anna Dell (281-485-2843) well in advance of any events you want announced in the newsletter.