



Riverside Nature Notes

The Riverside
Nature Center

Volume 15
April, 2006

Elena Brineman, The Original Volunteer

By Susan M. Sander (edited by Barbara Staggs)

I've been most fortunate to find the right people at the right time, and Elena Brineman appeared in my life at a most significant moment and became the rock-solid support for a wild idea.

When the spring of 1987 blanketed a downtown hillside with an abundance of wildflowers, it caught my eye (I was staff photographer for Bill Dozier at the Kerrville Daily Times). I quickly sought out the advice of Elena as to the owners (especially since the 8 acres were for sale and zoned commercial). The seed of an idea began to sprout, "What if the land could be preserved as it was, as a piece of Kerr County's natural heritage?"

With Elena's support as well as her real estate and community connections, we approached Kerrville's City Council and Dennis Kneese of the Parks Department. We explored the idea of community grants with the city. For 2 years we talked our way into every club and organization, gathering interested folks along the way (many of whom are still with RNC today).

In March, 1989, we held our first official meeting and became the Riverside Nature Center, elected a board of directors and drafted by-laws. Over the years Elena served on the board, helped with the capital campaign when the board decided to

purchase the current property, and was especially helpful in acquiring the land we now own. She was a constant supporter to me.

Too often we only recognize volunteers who are visible or who make large donations. Yet, there's a host of folks who work steadily behind the scenes. Elena was one of these. While she might not be physically planting flowers or laying out trails, she would show up with cookies and drinks for the worker bees. She'd bring families to events. She initiated other beautification projects, attended numerous city council meetings whenever the river was up for discussion, and she even helped RNC garner motel-hotel tax funds. However, most importantly, she brought us new members. She was our best PR person. It would be interesting to know how many newcomers to the area got their first exposure to Riverside because they were riding in her car as she showed them property. She wanted folks to feel at home, to know what made the community tick, where they might be able to lend a hand in volunteering or to meet new people, or learn more about this new place about to be called home.

Without her support and guidance a wild idea might have

stalled. Thanks to her, we can all share in the beauty of a project "well done".

Those who attended the gathering at RNC On April 1, 2006, to celebrate Elena's life know what a dynamic spirit she had. Born in Havana, Cuba, of American parents, she thoroughly enjoyed everywhere she lived, and quickly absorbed the local history, culture and geography. Her appetite for knowledge, her desire to meet new people, and her zest for life were obvious elements of what she was. She was always trying to add something special to each place she lived—much to our blessing. The laughter we all shared listening to her children and grandchildren tell stories about her life will keep a little part of Elena in each of us. If we can all do something to make this a better place because we have passed through here, then she will have taught us well.



Kerr's 150th Birthday— A CELEBRATION at RNC



April 8th was a busy day here at RNC! We were a bit disappointed with the crowd turnout at 10 a.m., but as the day progressed, things picked up! In fact, by the time we had the cloggers and the square dancers performing, our numbers had increased tenfold! As you can tell by the next page, we had quite a large number of volunteers helping us that day! We made a little money, but we mostly just paid the related bills!

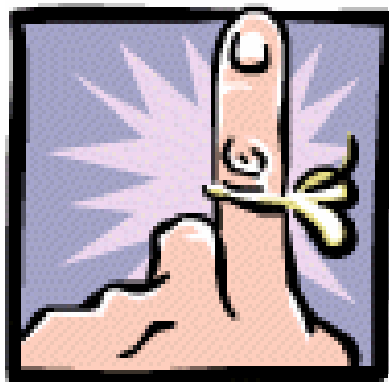
probably would have brought back good, old-fashioned memories! At least that was the plan anyway!

Can't tell you how much I appreciate all the help from our volunteers and support organizations like Native Plant Society of TX, Kerrville Chapter, Master Naturalists, and Junior Service Guild? You and/or your organizations have really been extra helpful to offer assistance to SO many different activities this month! THANK YOU! THANK YOU! THANK YOU!

RNC wanted to support this important historical milestone by offering a variety of activities that would bring to life the way things were 100 to 150 years ago. Apparently, we were at least somewhat successful because we were even recognized in the Kerrville Daily Times in a letter to the editor from a local who said he really enjoyed himself when he was here that day. We had antiques in the Lawson Store, we had games like London Bridge and songs from that time period. We had historical displays and even a presentation about the Indians who were here before Kerr was even a county.

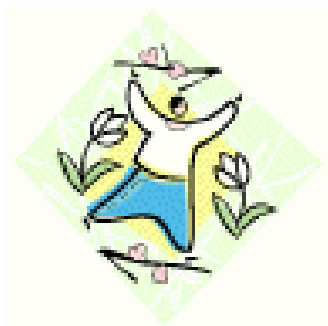
If you didn't get to come, you missed a fun time that

Speaking of appreciating our volunteers, **RNC is going to sponsor a Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon at Mamacita's on Thurs., June 8th from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.** If you have volunteered at RNC in ANY capacity, **PLEASE, mark this date on your calendar!**



Welcome to New Members At RNC!!

- Rev. Robert & Dr. Kim Lohmeyer
- Roger Massey at A & J Lock & Safe
- Mr. & Mrs. Linford Mease
- Ms. Deborah Rettko
- Mr. & Mrs. Harvey Vordenbaum



A Very Special THANK YOU for the Gift goes to...David & Barbara Staggs—for their donation toward a scholarship to RNC's Summer Camp Program!

BY THE WAY...we'd really like to offer this same opportunity to at least one child for each of our 4 different camps that we're offering this summer (see the insert for more information about our summer programming).



Kerr 150th Thank You's

Thanks to the following for donations:

Albertsons and HEB - cakes for cake walk

Clarlyle Carpet - carpet squares for cake walk

Sonic on Sidney Baker - food boats for fajitas

David Vasquez -cooking, serving &
furnishing beef & chicken for fajitas

Jimmy Otiveros & Michael Vasquez - cooking
& then transporting cooked fajita meat

Joy Bradford, Sue Hausler, Jody Harmon,
and Joyce Sandlin—Cakes, brownies, cookies

Parking Lot

Tom Rodriquez, city patrolman,
Jim Laughlin & Bill Hausler

Admission—Greeting Table

Joyce Sandlin, Ginny de Wolf, Sue Hausler
Dusty Gilliam, & Edna Platte

Food Cashiers

Mark Tuschak, Kim Lohmeyer,
David Vasquez, & Melinda Wasson

Lawson Store Docent

Carolyn MacAskie, Royce Stone

Canoeing

Ilse Bailey, Bill Gibson & Roger MacAskie

Woodworking

Angelo Falzarano & Doug Bressler

Sing-a-long, Horseshoes, & Cake Walk

Jim & Mary Boman

Sign Making

Jennifer Bone, Joyce Sandlin

Floaters & Displays Help

Karen & Jack Millikan, Sue Hausler

Front Desk and The Store

Betty Chaney, Ann Laughlin, Cita Ann Ruthstrom
& Mary Hart Frost

Presenters

Jay Keen, Eddie Spears & Bryant Saner

Demonstrations

Kick & Click Cloggers & Kerr-li-Q's

Flint Knapping

Woody Woodson & Paul Smith

Quilt Making

Selma Gibson

Antique Car Display

Hill Country Auto Club members
Joann & Mel Heck &
Armin & Ginny Pagel

Antique Grocery Store Display Items

Jay Keen, Eddie Spears, Jim & Ann Laughlin,
& John Quinby

Setup and Cleanup

Special thanks to all our volunteers (esp. Shannon Smith, Jim & Priscilla Stanley, John Quinby, Selma Gibson, Gloria Olsen, and Jim Boman) who came to help set up and/or stayed late to clean up afterwards.

Special thanks to Andy Pesez for mowing before the event and for setting up the entrance tent along with John Quinby.

Thank you to Roger & Carolyn MacAskie for cleaning up the trash/debris in the Guadalupe!





The Riverside Nature Center

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Website: www.riversidenaturecenter.org

Office and Store Hours:
9AM– 4PM Monday— Friday;
10AM-3PM Saturday and Sunday
TREE TRAIL open daily DAWN to DUSK
FREE ADMISSION !!!

RIVERSIDE NATURE CENTER'S MISSION IS
TO FOSTER GREATER PUBLIC AWARENESS
AND APPRECIATION OF THE HILL
COUNTRY'S NATURAL RESOURCES
THROUGH EDUCATION, INFORMATION,
AND BY EXAMPLE.

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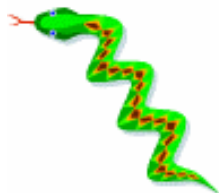
COMING EVENTS MARK YOUR CALENDAR !!

June 8, 2006
RNC's Volunteer
Appreciation Lunch,
11:30 am—1:30 pm at
Mamacita's! There IS such a
thing as a free lunch! Come see!

RNC Summer Camps
-Photography Camp
-Nature Adventure Camp
-Wilderness Camp
-Splash Camp
(see the insert or website
for more information)
Send your child or grandchild
for a week of fun and learning!

**'06 BROWN BAG
LUNCH & LEARN
Program Schedule**

May 11th,
**Texas Snakes: Everything
You Ever Wanted to Know
But Were Afraid to Ask**
By Dr. Lou Densmore
Of Texas Tech University



Sept. 7th,
**Seeds: The Fruit
of the Matter**
by Barbara Lowenthal
& Linda Riner



Oct. 12th,
Basic Birding:
How to Identify Birds
by Jay Keen