



Riverside Nature Notes

The Riverside
Nature Center

Volume 23
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A New Law—Helps Charitable Giving by Wes Dorman



As we approach the end of the year, please keep Riverside in mind for your annual charitable giving. I can suggest two approaches, one old and one new. The old approach is giving appreciated stock. The stock market has had a good year, and you may be holding stocks that have appreciated significantly. Rather than selling those stocks, you can donate them directly to Riverside and avoid the capital gains tax. If this is something that interests you, please contact me at 896-3850 at the Broadway Bank for more information.

The new approach, the IRA Charitable Rollover, authorized by the Pension Protection Act of 2006,

is a gift from your IRA directly to Riverside. To take advantage of this giving opportunity you need to be 70 ½ and taking the Required Minimum Distribution from your IRA. You can direct all or a portion of that distribution be made to Riverside. The amount of your donation will count towards the minimum distribution amount, but will not count as income, thus reducing your reportable income. To make this gift you will need to instruct your IRA Trustee to make the contribution directly to Riverside. This method is only available for the tax years 2006 and 2007.

Before deciding to make a gift utilizing either approach, please consult with your tax advisor to make sure the method you are considering will work for you. And remember, the oldest methods of giving, volunteering your time or a gift of cash, are always appreciated.



**HAVE YOU
THOUGHT ABOUT
CHRISTMAS
SHOPPING AT
RNC?**

By Ann Laughlin

Not finished your Christmas shopping? Dread the crowds and limited parking? Consider shopping at The Store at Riverside. We carry unique merchandise at reasonable prices.

We have hand-painted Christmas cards by Anne Held, books which are specific to the Hill Country, wooden frogs which sound like the real thing, birds with true sounds, wine corks with turtles and frogs perched on top, tubes of chocolate/candy covered sunflower seeds topped with a sunflower, terra cotta items from Guatemala, hand-made jewelry and more!

Come shop and view our beautiful Christmas Tree decorated by ornaments made of recycled items by students at Notre Dame School. And don't forget, Members receive a 10% discount on most items.



Meet RNC's Volunteer of the Month, Edith Bettinger by Barbara Staggs



Edith Bettinger was born in Jacksboro, Texas. She attended SMU and served as a computer systems analyst for Republic National Bank in the Dallas area until she retired in 1979 after 20 years. Her husband, Bill retired from his job as an Engineering Technician working on aircraft and missiles. Edith stated that when she married Bill, he had a lovely piece of property by Grapevine Lake that had many wildflowers. This allowed her to expand her life-long love of nature and plants, and especially her interest in native Texas wildflowers. She started pressing specimens she could not identify, and as a result, became an amateur botanist of sorts. She became a charter member of the Native Plant Society of Texas (NPSOT), a state organization of 30 chapters and 2,000 members. She eventually was asked to write articles for The Texas Wildflower Newsletter.

After retirement Edith and Bill moved to Sebring, Florida to be close to their daughter and granddaughter. When her daughter decided to move to California, she and Bill felt it was time to move back to Texas. They traveled the state looking at many different sites to consider for relocation. When driving into Kerrville, there were so many wonderful wildflowers along the highway and in fields, that they both fell in love with the area right away. They stopped at Coldwell Banker Realtors and met Stu Mitchell who introduced them to the one and only, Elena Brineman.

Elena and Edith immediately became friends as they had a common love of wildflowers and interest in conserving and promoting native plants. Bill & Edith moved to Kerrville in 1991, and one of Edith's first activities was to organize the Kerrville Chapter of NPSOT.

Edith began volunteering in 1994 at RNC by helping Susan Sander clean and package native-plant seed. These efforts of collecting, packaging and selling wildflower seeds at RNC led to the formation of a group of women who wanted to learn more about hill country wildflowers. They called themselves the "Gleaners". Each year they collected, cleaned, and packaged seed to sell or share. As coordinator of the Gleaners, Edith also led tours for viewing RNC's wildflowers and held wildflower identification workshops. She developed wildflower identification systems and a portfolio of related educational materials that became The Riverside Gleaners Handbook. She directed collection and pressing of wildflower specimens to represent a comprehensive display of hill country flowers.

After the Visitor Center was completed Edith assisted with weeding, transplanting, and advising on naturalistic landscaping. She helped get wildflowers established on the property and contributed plants from her own garden and nursery. When no longer able to do gardening and tour-guiding, Edith began concentrating on developing her pressed flower skills, and she still sells her beautiful artwork in our gift shop. She first discovered this amazing talent when she and others decided to do pressed flower cards as a fund raiser for NPSOT. Edith was the only one that stuck with it, and she even started making some money! This was exciting and even though she did not like selling things, she felt she could go to gift shops and nature-oriented conferences with her note cards, bookmarks, and pictures. She really did not have to do much sales pitching, as wherever she took them, people seemed to love

her pieces. Each is a wonderful work of art with such fine detail that it is amazing. Edith has conducted several classes in the art of pressing flowers, and she has also presented to numerous garden clubs about pressed flower art. She says that working on her art is relaxing and gives her a sense of peace and calm. She donates her artwork to sell at RNC's gift shop. These would make great Christmas gifts for those of you who are still looking for unique, one of a kind items!

We thank you, Edith for all your years of hard work and service by being such an ardent advocate for RNC's mission of conserving and promoting our wonderful native plants and wildflowers.

Calling All Green Thumbs & Helping Hands

By Susan Sander

If you enjoy gardening and native plants, then the Riverside Nature Center will be a perfect place for you on February 17th for our Garden Tenders Workshop.

Our beautiful 4 acres feature close to 500 species of mostly native Hill Country plants valued at over \$30,000, and that's just the trees found along our Nature Trail.

Our mission is "to foster greater public awareness of the natural resources of the Hill Country by information, education, and by example." The arboretum is a natural "exhibit" of what grows naturally in the beautiful TX Hill Country, but

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Welcome, New Members To RNC!!

also a classroom for school groups as well as for landowners who seek to incorporate native plants in a landscape. RNC is also home base for the Texas Master Naturalists, Kerrville Chapter and the Native Plant Society of Texas, Kerrville Chapter.

In order to keep our living exhibit-garden in seasonal bloom, it needs proper care and maintenance. To ensure a spring wildflower display we must act now in order to delight the anticipated hundreds of visitors in April for the State Master Gardeners' Conference, for RNC's Earth Day, and for the school children who come to learn about wildflowers.

Therefore, on February 17, 2007, RNC's Landscape Committee will host a free Garden Tenders Volunteer Training, open to RNCA members and the public. All current and prospective volunteers are encouraged to attend to facilitate a coordinated approach. The goal of this workshop is to develop a team approach to garden care and to train plant-tenders on the particular care of native plants in a landscape setting with a focus on the winter tasks that promote spring wildflowers.

A series of quarterly workshops are being planned to cover season maintenance needs as well as native plant identification (and wildlife values), how to prune, how to collect wildflower seeds, butterfly gardening, etc.

Call RNCA to sign up (257-4837) or email Susan Sander at rainlily@omniglobal.net. Details will follow in the January Newsletter.

**Stephanie Ertel
Virginia Higgins, Kerr Villa Kountry Store
Mrs. Ruth Stotesbury**

A Very Special THANK YOU for the Gift goes to... our November donors:

Center Point Garden Club
Madrona Garden Club
Mr. and Mrs. John Quinby
Mrs. Royce Stone

Corrections in October donors listing:

Stewart and Mimi McMillen
Jim Creswell
We apologize for these errors!

More Details about the Land Management Classes Scheduled for January, 2007!!!

The Riverside Nature Center will host a two-part presentation entitled "The Ecology of the Hill Country, and How You Can Take Care of Your Little Piece of It" by Jim Stanley, Master Naturalist, as part of our 06-07 Adult Learning for Living Series.

The first day will be on Saturday, January 13 from 9:00 till noon here at the Riverside Nature Center's meeting rooms. The topics will be: The Changing Ecology of the Hill Country, A Very Short Introduction to Ranching 101, Cedar Encroachment, and Population Increase and Fragmented Lands.

The second part will be on Saturday, January 20, from 9:00 till noon also at the Riverside Nature Center meeting rooms. The topics for the second part will be: Deer Overpopulation, Oak Wilt, Exotics, and What You Can Do on Your Place.

Admission fee: \$5.00 per adult.—1/2 price for RNC members!



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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Kerrville, Texas

COMING EVENTS MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

**Entry fee for all programs is
\$5.00 for Adults—1/2 price
for members!
Kids 12 & under—FREE!!**

Adult Learning for Living Series

2 Sats., Jan. 13 & 20, 9 am—12 pm
**Land Management, How to Make
Your Property Healthy**
by Jim Stanley, TX Master Naturalist

See page 3 for
more details.



Brown Bag Lunch & Learn Series Thurs., Jan. 11th—noon to 1 p.m.

**Computer Printers—What You Need
to Know**

by Ray Curtis,
Manager of Cartridge World

**Bring your lunch, &
we'll provide you
with a drink & desert!!!**



STAR PARTY!!! Sat., Jan. 20th at 7 p.m.
Fun for ALL ages (starting with school age children)!
There'll be 4 telescopes available for star/planet gazing!
See our website for program and viewing details.