



# Riverside Nature Notes

The Riverside  
Nature Center

Volume 17  
June, 2006

## RNC's FIRST Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon..... A Good Time Was Had By All!

## Volunteering at RNC: Why do it? By Priscilla Stanley

On June 8, 2006 volunteers at RNC were treated to a special luncheon at Mamacita's Restaurant as a big THANK YOU for all the time they have contributed in the many areas of work at Riverside. It was a great success and enjoyed by all who were in attendance. The food was delicious as usual at Mamacita's, and there was certainly an abundance of it! Taking home leftovers was also very popular. Hagi, the owner and host, was most gracious in coming to welcome everyone. In response, Cass encouraged everyone to give him thank you applause for having us all and for making the entire lunch possible.

After eating for awhile, there were some facts and figures Cass wanted to present to let the volunteers know and understand what their contribution really means in terms of hard numbers:

1. The number of visitors who signed in at RNC from June, 2004 to May, 2005 were 2,007. However, the numbers for June, 2005 to May, 2006 are up to 2,584! This is an increase of 577.
2. The total number of students attending field trip programs scheduled at RNC from October 26, 2005 to May 22, 2006 was 614.

3. The last number shared was a very important statistic to the group in attendance as well as to RNC. An organization called The Independent Sector determines the hourly value of volunteer time each year for non-profit organizations. Non-profits across the country use this hourly rate to determine the monetary value of their volunteers' hours, especially for grant requests. The hourly rate for 2006 was set at \$18.04. At RNC, the number of volunteer hours from October 1, 2005 thru May 31, 2006 (not a full fiscal year, by the way) was 2,163.3 hours. This amount multiplied by the number of our volunteers' hours was determined to be a grand total of \$39,025.93. This shows what a valuable asset our volunteers are not just as resources but monetarily as well!

Finally, Cass introduced each of the Board Members present at the luncheon, which included: Wes Dorman, Jean Bondy, Mary Ellen Summerlin, Jim Laughlin, Kim Lohmeyer, Paul Avery, Jennifer Bone, Jim Boman, and John Quinby. Everyone enjoyed visiting a little more while eating a wonderful dessert.

I first came to RNC to learn about the plants that would grow well in the Hill Country. We were building a house and wanted to do the one acre landscaping ourselves. RNC has the best collection of native trees, shrubs and flowers in the Hill Country until you reach Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center in Austin.

I began volunteering in 2001 with the Thursday morning gardening group. I worked side by side with native plant experts and learned more each week. There was also an unanticipated benefit. I made wonderful friends with folks who shared a common interest in helping people learn about native plants and how these plants actually like our difficult Hill Country growing conditions, including a semi-arid climate, alkaline soil (when you have soil), and highly variable temperature.

**(Continued on page 3)**





## RNC's Volunteer of the Month Angelo Falzarano by Barbara Staggs

Angelo is known to many as “the pied piper of RNC”. That is because when he is working with kids that are part of school groups or with the day camps, they follow and listen to all of the interesting stories and facts he has to share. You can tell they love every minute of it, and the great thing about it is, so does Angelo. He would like us all to know that the reason he does this work is because he believes that the children are our most important product. They are our future, and he'd like to help change a few by giving them a little love and understanding of nature.

Angelo was born in Roxbury, Massachusetts. When he was 10 years old, his family moved to San Diego, Calif. At 16 he left school, lied about his age, and joined the Marines where he served in Korea. After returning he finished high

school and then attended San Diego City College. During this time he met his wife, Donna, and in 1958 they were married. Angelo says he was a hip motorcyclist with an earring till Donna put a stop to that!

They moved to Ft. Worth in 1960 where Angelo worked for The United States Air Force becoming an Air Force Reservist so they could send him all over the world to work. He was a man of many talents for the 32 years that he worked for the Air Force. He was an Aircraft Maintenance Controller, Classified Courier and Load Master (loading and ferrying supplies all over the world, including Vietnam). His talents were not limited to his work. Always interested in music, Angelo was asked to join the Ft. Worth Opera Association in 1962! For the next 20 years he sang and danced with the Opera Company performing in Colo., La., and OK. He has also been a very successful organic gardener.

With his job Angelo had free time while home in the USA, so he was able to volunteer this free time in many places. He and his family, now including a daughter and son, became docents at the Ft. Worth Zoo. They then asked him to become a lead teacher at the Zoo and this became a paid position. He also volunteered at the Natural History Museum in Ft. Worth and the Ft. Worth Nature Center. Angelo gives a lot of credit to Donna whose

expertise in writing curriculum made a success of all these various endeavors. All this was a lead-in to his work at RNC.

Angelo's third career was a collectable business which included sports and non sports, baseball cards, comics and NASCAR memorabilia. His love of all sports made this a natural outlet for him. He would like to let everyone know he still has collectibles left to sell, so feel free to call him!

Angelo and Donna moved to Kerrville in 2002. The real story is Donna moved here before him, found the property, and started to build their house while Angelo was trying to sell their other home. Donna discovered RNC, so after Angelo arrived in Kerrville, he took a Master Naturalist class at RNC doing over 1,000 hours of volunteer work at RNC to get his Master Naturalist Certification. That is how Riverside became blessed with “the pied piper”. Besides doing the summer camp classes and working with school groups throughout the year, Angelo is a big hit at birthday parties at RNC. He talks about animals and their habitats bringing out fox, snakes, tarantulas and even a coudimundi. His favorite animal is the alligator.

Angelo and Donna will celebrate their 48th wedding anniversary in July. Riverside thanks you, Angelo, for all you do!





### A Very Special THANK YOU for the Gift goes to...

#### We reached our goal—got 4 Scholarships!

David & Barbara Staggs donated money in memory of Elena Brineman for 1 camp scholarship. Mr. & Mrs. William Laing donated money for 2 camp scholarships. We received our last donation for a camp scholarship from Bill & Trish Stone! This allowed us to offer one scholarship for EACH camp!!! Thank you all, S000000 much!

#### May Donations:

- Ray Baldwin
- Hill Country Garden Council
- Jay Keen
- Kerrville State Hospital
- William Laing
- Gloria Olsen
- Dottie Patterson
- Andre Pesez
- Security State Bank & Trust
- Tim Summerlin
- Texas Garden Clubs, Inc.
- Rudi & Jan Winzinger

### WELCOME, New RNC Members!

**Mr. & Mrs. Bill Anderson**  
**Richard Koon, Hill Country Fly Fishers**  
**Diane Oehler, Director Hill Country Casa, Inc.**

Last month's newsletter didn't have RNC 's Volunteer of the Month's photo. Here is Cheryl Smith! We also erred! Her husband's name is BLAKE! We apologize!

\*\*\*\*\*

#### (Volunteering at RNC...Continued from page 1)

Native plants are currently threatened by development because many folks don't recognize these plants or their virtues. Native plants are very water thrifty, and don't need fertilizer or pesticides, which saves owners time, effort and money. The RNC gardens showcase many native plants so that people can see an alternative to a typical home landscape.



Our Gardening and Grounds Group still works on Thursday mornings, starting around 9 AM, with both men and women participating. It is very informal, and you don't have to know anything about Hill Country plants. Think of this volunteering as free lessons! Folks can come as often as they choose and stay for whatever time works for them. It is a great opportunity to get to know the plants as they change from week to week throughout the seasons. Please come join us!

### IMPORTANT NOTICE:



#### DON'T FORGET!!!!

The next time you come by RNC, please don't forget to sign up for our **Adopt-A-Spot Program!** The sign-up binder is in the atrium area of the Visitor Center. To those of you who have already taken care of this task—**THANK YOU!**



**The Riverside Nature Center**

**Riverside Nature Center**  
150 Francisco Lemos Street  
Kerrville, Texas 78029

**Phone:** 830-257-4837  
**Fax:** 830-257-4837  
**Email:** rnca@ktc.com

**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.

Non-Profit Org.  
U.S. Postage  
**PAID**  
Permit No. 15  
Kerrville, Texas

## COMING EVENTS MARK YOUR CALENDAR !!

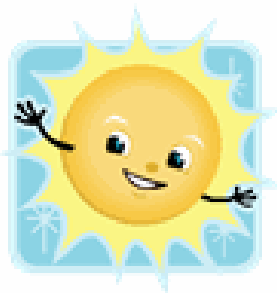
### RNC's Summer Camps

We still have room in:

- Nature Adventure Camp
- Splash Camp

(see our website for more  
information & the registration form)

**Send your child or grandchild  
for a week of fun and learning!**



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

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



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