



Riverside Nature Notes

The Riverside
Nature Center

Volume 32
November 2007

MEMBERSHIP FEES INCREASING By Gloria Olsen

SOME MISSING THANK YOUS

On recommendation of the Membership Committee, the RNC Board approved some changes in membership levels and benefits, which will be effective beginning in January 2008. The Riverside Nature Center Association last reviewed and changed its membership levels in 2001. Since that time, RNC has enjoyed steady growth in programs, staff, and services offered as well as in the use of the Nature Center facilities. Along with this growth have come added expenses, and the Board has therefore agreed to modest increases in membership dues.

Effective January 1, 2008, the following are our annual fees for **Personal Membership Levels and Benefits:**

Individual	\$35
Family	\$50
Friend	\$100
Supporter	\$250
Sustaining	\$500
Benefactor	\$750
Patron	\$1000

Members will continue to enjoy a 10% discount on gift shop purchases (except consignment items), early admission to plant sales, reduced admission fees to RNCA programs where admission fees are charged, and reduced facility rental fees.

Business and Organization Membership Levels & Benefits will also change:

Non-profit Organizations \$100
12 hours free facilities' use & 25% off rental fees for facilities' use beyond the 12 free hours

<u>Supporter level</u>	\$250
3 membership cards & 25% off facility rental fees	
<u>Sustaining Level</u>	\$500
5 membership cards & 25% off facility rental fees	
<u>Benefactor Level</u>	\$750
5 membership cards & 25% off facility rental fees	
<u>Patron Level</u>	\$1000
5 membership cards & 25% off facility rental fees	

Room rental fees are \$75 per hour during regular business hours, and \$100 per hour outside of our regular business hours (i.e., 9 am to 4 pm Mon-Fri., 10 am to 3 pm Sat -Sun).

The Nature Center is committed to continued growth in our educational programming and to keeping our operating costs as low as possible.

Your continued financial support AND your willingness to volunteer your time and talents, combined with these membership level adjustments will better assist us in meeting our goals in 2008.

On behalf of the Board, staff and volunteers of the Riverside Nature Center Association, we extend our best wishes for Christmas and the New Year, and our appreciation for your support and understanding of the need for these changes/increases. **NOTE: Anyone who has paid their membership fees that are sent notice and paid prior to January 1, 2008 will keep their membership fees at that rate until their renewal anniversary comes due in 2008. However, facility use changes begin 1/1/08.**

The following list of volunteers' names were accidentally left off our list last month, but these folks also helped to make our recent Down By the Riverside Event very successful:

**SHANNON SMITH
STAN COBBS
JANIS HERD**

We sincerely apologize for not getting these good folks on our "Thank You from the Bottom of Our Hearts" list last month! We try very hard not to leave people's names off of our recognition lists, but if we do, we try to make the appropriate amends.

By the way, if you know of someone else we missed, **PLEASE** let us know!



Meet RNC'S Volunteer of the Month, Barbara Staggs

By Ed Fort



Barbara Staggs, RNC's Volunteer of the Month, used to write these articles for our monthly newsletters! Read how this is now changing!

If you've enjoyed reading the Volunteer of the Month column, there's good news and bad news. First the bad news...Barbara Staggs, who has done such a great job for the last couple of years won't be writing it any longer. The good news is that she has received a 'promotion' to manage the RNC Gift Shop! Since early 2006, Barbara has worked diligently to get together the skinny on other folk who do so much for Riverside. Now it's time to turn the tables. She will make a great gift shop manager because she has run two retail businesses of her own. But...we're getting ahead of ourselves.

Barbara was born and raised out in the country near Corpus Christi. She grew up with an assortment of farm creatures and a love of nature and the outdoors. Only a 'few' years ago she graduated as Valedictorian from Calallen High School when it wasn't yet the football powerhouse it is now. After starting at Del Mar College in Corpus, she transferred to Texas Tech, where she received a BS degree. The really exciting event during those Tech years came when she met her husband, David. She's quiet about the details, but apparently they met on a triple date—in a Volkswagen! Eventually, they married and lived in Lubbock while he

finished his degree in Electrical Engineering. Barbara worked as a librarian for both the Lubbock Public and the Texas Tech University libraries. They moved to Richardson, Texas after David's graduation where they began their family. Barbara stayed home to raise daughter, Rachel, and son, Alex, but also volunteered at the Richardson Public Library. Later she substitute taught at the preschool where both kids were enrolled.

In 1983 they moved to Austin when it was in the very early stages of massive growth. Their home backed up to fields where their young family walked and studied wildlife. "We had some wonderful times there", Barbara remembers. Eventually, she went to work at a gift and antique shop because of her interest in antiques and collectibles that arose from the many family pieces that had passed down to them. In 1991 Barbara's dream of opening her own shop became a reality when she and a friend opened "The Apple Barrel". With a *lot* of time and work (actually, she calls it "a labor of love"), the shop became very successful. In fact, her shop displays were so creative, that customers began asking if the staff would decorate their homes. This started a great sideline until her mother became ill, and the family had to move to Austin proper. Barbara and her partner then decided to sell the shop and begin a decorating service they called "Rearrangements" which also became a very successful venture.

When the Staggs came to Kerrville in 1994 for a family celebration, they rediscovered the beautiful Hill Country/Kerr County. Barbara picked up a real estate magazine and saw the picture of a woman who would become the perfect realtor for them—Elena Brineman! Meeting her changed their lives, as Elena helped

them buy what was supposed to be just "investment property". Barbara remembers, "We would come visit our land, take Elena to lunch, and have such interesting conversations!" Elena made a point of showing them RNC while explaining her vision for this wonderful spot. Eventually, their property became the place where they decided to build a retirement home. Still not sure when they would move, they broke ground in Dec. of 2000. David received the opportunity to retire, so in Feb. 2005, Hunt became richer by acquiring these two most interesting residents. The Staggs enjoy traveling, especially places like Greece, Italy, England, Scotland, and Holland as well as various destinations in the USA. Barbara also likes learning about gardening, native plants and being involved with the Hunt Garden Club. They are very involved in the Hunt UMC, and they enjoy KPAS, Symphony of the Hills, and the Hill Country Auto Club. Yes, she even owns a 1969 Pontiac GTO that has won awards in several car shows!

Barbara says that she became involved in RNC because of Elena's devotion to the project, as well as their love of nature and passion for places like this—where people of all ages can learn or just enjoy a quiet walk. She progressed in her RCN volunteer career from helping in the office area to writing the Volunteer of the Month column in the newsletter. She says, "It has been so interesting getting to know the people who come together to sustain this amazing place called RNC." Congratulations, Barbara on your promotion to oversee the Gift Shop! However, we thank you for your deep commitment, hard work and interesting newsletter articles, and we look forward to your amazing talents being utilized in a new way in the gift shop area!

We thank Ed Fort who has agreed to take on writing the monthly newsletter articles on our Volunteer of the Month! We are again blessed to have such talented people to do what needs to be done at RNC!

Help STILL Wanted!



The following committees still need volunteers:

Promotions and Public Relations for RNC's many events and activities is capably overseen by Director Linda Karst Stone. However, Linda could use some volunteer help distributing RNC brochures, writing press releases, taking photographs of activities and events, making & distributing fliers for events, even researching advertising opportunities and costs. A volunteer could agree to help with one single event, such as Earth Day, or for a more ongoing basis.

Membership and Volunteers is chaired by Director Jennifer Bone who oversees the promotion of membership, recruitment, orientation of volunteers as well as developing/creating volunteer recognition opportunities. Jennifer could use some help, and this is a wonderful opportunity to become acquainted with our members as well as our many, talented volunteers.

Grants and Fundraising. You could help by researching possible grant funding sources online or contacting possible sources of donations or grants to benefit RNC.

Annual Events, Education, and Buildings and Landscaping also welcome volunteers! Your commitment of time enables the Nature Center to expand our programs, beautify our grounds &/or buildings, and educates all ages of people. Best of all, you will make some interesting new friends and perhaps learn more about our beautiful, and sometimes amazing natural world.

If you are interested in one of these opportunities, or would just like to learn more, please let Cass know. She will put you in touch with the right person.



PLEASE WELCOME these New RNC Members:

Mr. and Mrs. Don Betterman
Laurie Blankenship
Ernest and Karen Casillas
Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Luther
Mrs. Frances Watson



A GREAT BIG THANK YOU TO THESE OCTOBER AND NOVEMBER DONORS:

Dr. Ted Boyce
Wes Dorman
L. D. Lusk
Andre Pesez
Ilene M. Roemer
David and Barbara Staggs
Joyce Bagby
Center Point Garden Club
Hill Country Archeology Association





The Riverside Nature Center

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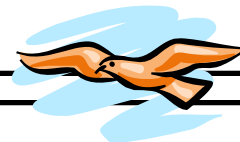
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Office and Store Hours:
9AM– 4PM Monday—Friday;
10AM-3PM Saturday and Sunday
TRAILS open daily DAWN to DUSK
FREE ADMISSION !!!

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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UPCOMING EVENTS!!!! MARK YOUR CALENDAR!!!!



March 1, 2008, 10-11:30 a.m.

Birding 101 for Couples and Families by Cass & Jay Keen

Brought back by popular demand, Jay and Cass will share bird identification techniques for all ages! The program will be followed by a short trip around the RNC grounds to practice identifying birds, SO bring your binoculars!

Entry fee: \$5 per adult; \$2.50 for kids 12 & under. RNC members half price!

April 5, 2008, 9 a.m. to noon

**Field Trip to Wild Boar Farm: Learn About Local, Organic Food
by Peggy Sechrist & Daniel Bacon**

Come see for yourself how an organic farm operates.

See why locally grown food is a hot commodity!

**Entrance Fee: \$10 per person;
\$7.50 for all RNC members!**

