



ISSUE FORTY-SEVEN

Fall 2002

TREES ON THE BAYOU

After a late spring mini-drought that stressed last winter's tree plantings, a wet mild summer brought on a lush and hardy growth period. As far as this coming winter's plantings go, discussions and plans are ongoing. The Park People have a confirmed date to do another planting in TC Jester Park and the Trees for Houston has an active planting program stretching from 11th Street to 21st Street. WOBA will continue its own humble sapling planting program as well. The Lazybrook and Timbergrove residents continue to do nice work along TC Jester Blvd.

With this summer's rains and resulting growth, came the invasion of the exotics into the Timbergrove, Park People and Boy Scout "Tree Islands." On more than one occasion, WOBA members ventured forth to wage war against tallows and potato vines. As a result, 6'' samplings planted the last two winters, have flourished and some are now pushing 6'. And by golly, these islands are beginning to look like groves that are part of a larger bayou forest.

Upstream, near the Beltway and Gessner, the Flood Control District clear cut two wooded parcels to construct detention ponds and is presently evaluating a third parcel in that same area. That is a definite trade off situation. The bayou desperately needs more detention, but at the same time we encourage Flood Control to preserve ecologically sensitive areas and do plantings in detention ponds where appropriate.

CALENDAR

(event details found throughout newsletter)

November 13, 2002 - WOBA Annual Meeting

December 1, 2002 - Bike Race, TC Jester Park

December 7, 2002 - Wortham Island walking tour

early Spring 2003 - WOB Federal Project draft for public comment

March 23, 2003 - Trash Bash, Moody Park & Little Thicket Park & Woodlands Trail/WOB North

WOBA ANNUAL MEETING

Come join the White Oak Bayou Association at its annual public meeting on Wednesday, November 13, 2002, at the Historic Heights Firehouse, 12th and Yale in Houston. We open up for a social hour at 6:30 PM and will begin our short business meeting at 7:00 PM. Following this, we will receive an update on the White Oak Bayou Federal Project from Wayne Crull of the Harris County Flood Control District. We will then present talks from Dr. Roger Moore, an archeologist, and Jane Cahill of the Old Sixth Ward Neighborhood Association. Throughout the meeting, representatives of various community groups will be on hand to tell you the good works they are doing to improve our natural environment. Please join us. Thanks as always to Bob Pearson and the Houston Heights Association for use of the beautiful firehouse.

WORTHAM ISLAND WALKING TOUR

A cool weather walking tour of the Wortham Island Area will be hosted by WOBA on Saturday morning, December 7, at 11:30am. Please meet us at the TC Jester Park Pool parking lot. We will caravan across the bayou following the Park People tree planting event scheduled for earlier that same morning. Dress for a hike and wear shoes that enjoy mud if there've been recent rains. The hike will take approximately 60-90 minutes.

Wortham Island is located across the bayou from TC Jester Park. This isolated 30 acre wooded tract contains remnants of the old natural bayou channel and bayou ecosystem as well as a handful of native white oaks. While the Parks and Rec owns Wortham Island proper, nearly 20 acres of the land is privately held and under constant threat to be developed. As we explore the 3 miles of rolling earthen trails and appreciate this in-town escape from the urban world, we'll discuss strategies to promote the public acquisition of the private property with our guests.

All are welcome and encouraged to join us on this casual walk and talk.

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*Many thanks to the folks at our printer,
Downtown Duplicating.*

It is always a pleasure doing business with you.

%%%

2 White Oak Bayou Association

The White Oak Bayou Association is a non-profit citizens' organization dedicated to the preservation, restoration, and maintenance of the natural wildlife habitats along our bayou. We promote compatible recreational opportunities and seek to increase public awareness, appreciation, and enjoyment of White Oak Bayou, its tributaries and environs. Membership consists of individuals, civic groups, professional organizations, and businesses and is open to all interested persons or groups. All membership contributions are tax deductible.

A quarterly newsletter is published and mailed to a growing mailing list with additional copies distributed to area businesses. General Meetings are held quarterly at various locations along the bayou. Board Meetings are held at 7:30 pm on the second Wednesday of every month at Heights Firehouse #14, 12th Street and Yale, and are open to all interested persons. WOBA may be reached by phone at 713-864-3008.

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| Association Founder |
| Lynda Mifsud |

PRESIDENT'S LETTER

by Fred Lazare

Compared with last year, this has been a quiet year along the White Oak. We dodged a couple of recent bullets and have made it through the season without a damaging storm. However, within the watershed, the pressures that exacerbated the damages of Allison continue. Meaningful curbs on development in Houston and Harris County are not even on the radar of our elected officials. And so, up go the buildings on their beds of fill dirt, and it doesn't take a hydrologist or an engineer to notice that the bayous fill up more quickly than before. Hell of a way to live, isn't it?

Year after year, the White Oak Bayou Association works to improve life within the White Oak watershed. Some of you know us because we advocate for policies and projects that will diminish the chances for serious flooding. Indeed, this is a critical part of our mission. As I write, I am fresh from a White Oak Bayou Federal Project Advisory Committee meeting; a summary of that meeting appears in this newsletter. Please join us at our November 13 meeting for an update on the Federal Project from its Project Manager.

While we appreciate the effort put in by the Flood Control District under the leadership of Mike Talbot, we can only continue to shake our heads at the failure of the City of Houston to even acknowledge a flooding problem. A big raspberry to the City that did not bother to send a representative to the aforementioned Advisory Committee meeting. Bottom line is that until we the people can get a voice at City Hall, we will get government of, by and for the developers.

Ours is an organization that exists solely to represent the concerns of residents within the White Oak Bayou watershed. We subsist on contributions from our members, and we tailor our efforts to respond to your concerns. While we are comfortable talking flooding, we recognize that our bayous are much more than storm sewers pointed towards Galveston Bay. To that end, we have invited an archeologist and a preservationist to speak at our November 13 meeting. Our bayous are an integral part of Houston and we want everyone in the county to come to them as I do as part of an exercise program (that's me you see running most days along the White Oak north of 11th Street) or as a place to enjoy nature. We look forward to seeing and hearing from you.

LYNDA SMITH MIFSUD A WOMAN OF VISION

Lynda Smith Mifsud is the founder of The White Oak Bayou Association and has served as President, Past President and Advisor. Her foresight and leadership are keys to our success.

Lynda was born in Bangladesh. Her father worked for the State Department after India's independence and the partition of the county. "I was the first American child born in the newly created State."

Lynda's family moved to Arkansas when Lynda was a toddler. "When we returned to the states we move to Little Rock. My father owned a chain of grocery stores. After nine years in the business he decided to go back to farming. Our farm had it's own bayou. It was wonderful. I have great memories of my childhood and exploring 'our bayou'. In the winter it would freeze over and we would skate across it. In the summer there was fishing, swimming, boating and climbing on the surrounding trees. There wasn't much around except cows. Every once in a while we would be chased by a bull or surprised by cottonmouths. It was wild and wonderful."

When Lynda moved to Houston she and her then spouse bought a house in Woodland Heights, down the street from the White Oak Bayou. The natural setting of the White Oak Park sparked her interest and she wanted to take action to keep it that way. This coincided with an Army Corps of Engineers project on the Little White Oak Bayou. Lynda organized a group of concerned citizen to meet with the Corps to discuss alternatives to concrete. Their efforts resulted in a change of plan and established the citizen and Corps dialogue that continues today.

"There were enough problems and issues to warrant a group to be formed for proactive solutions. The first meeting was held at Toucan's (currently King Biscuit on White Oak) and about 35 people showed. It was a mix from both sides of the Bayou. There were representatives from the neighborhood, the Buffalo Bayou Coalition, The Bayou Preservation Association and the Woodland Heights Civic Club. The diversity of the group created the needed balance. I was very impressed how well joined efforts got things going." Lynda started with the vision of shepherding natural urban parks development along the White Oak Bayou. This vision was to create space that would be safe but have the elements of natural beauty and a place where families could enjoy nature. "Trails made sense. The Citizens Environmental Coalition (CEC) adopted the plan to get people to the bayou; the White Oak Bayou Association fostered it along its banks. As the bikeway interest grew in the City and Federal funding was made available, the Association



championed bikeways along the White Oak."

One of the first things the organization did was put together an inventory. This was to describe the condition of the White Oak Bayou and to identify its beauty. "This was a starting point for us to talk and channel our efforts for positive

change and development." This work was distributed throughout the community and brought interest in the preservation of the natural habitat along the banks of the White Oak.

From Lynda's involvement with the White Oak Bayou she became more involved with other wetland issues. She found herself going to seminars and taking an active role with other environmental organizations such as The Bayou Preservation Partnership and the CEC. She has a degree in Art and Accounting and for years she worked as a financial planner for oil companies. Through that career she was exposed to environmental law. She was told about an opening as an environmental planner for Metro. Lynda decided to change her profession for one that would incorporate her knowledge of finance and love of the environment, and become part of the decision process that had an impact on City development. She spent eleven years with Metro.

Lynda is in the process of another major change. "All things must come to an end. I decided not to put 100% of my efforts at work but to put 100% towards the future." May of this year Lynda quit her job and started her plans to move to Malta. "My husband (Vinnie) is from Malta. We went there for a vacation and knew that this was where we were going to settle. Vinnie has friends and family in Malta and holds a dual citizenship. It is a perfect place for me to get into my painting. At some point, we asked ourselves 'why wait'".

Lynda and Vinnie were married five years ago. "We met at my 45th birthday party and we were married nine months later. It's great being his partner and friend. We have so much in common. We both like doing different things together and our current plans are certainly different!"

Lynda has always been a person with vision. Without this attribute, it is doubtful the White Oak Bayou Association would have existed. She paved the way for others to follow. We all wish her luck in her new path. 🐾

UPDATE ON THE WEST 11th STREET PARK

by Lorraine Cherry and Nancy Greig
West 11th Street Park Advisory Council

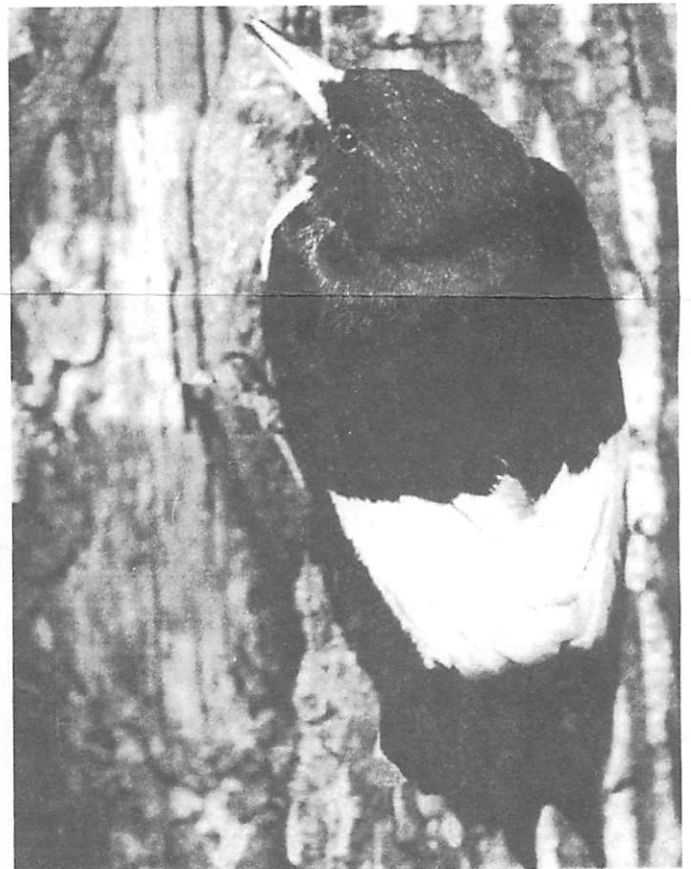
The West 11th Street Park is one of the largest stands of undisturbed native trees inside the 610 Loop. The 21-acre site contains approximately 1,800 trees, including some of the tallest in the city. It is a haven for herons and hawks, owls and butterflies, squirrels and crayfish. This inner-loop land is a perfect urban wildlife habitat.

This property is owned by the Houston Independent School District, but leased to the Houston Parks and Recreation Department (PARD). Under the terms of the lease, PARD maintains the property. Also under the terms of the lease, no structures may be erected in the park, and no trees may be removed without permission from HISD. PARD erected signs in the park in early 2002 designating the property as "West 11th Street Park."

In early 2001, a Park Advisory Council (PAC) was set up to plan and implement activities related to the park and to serve as liaison between the surrounding community and PARD. The PAC has devoted its efforts to activities that will increase knowledge about and enjoyment of West 11th Street Park, without causing permanent changes to the property.



One of our first priorities was to re-think the mowing regimen for the park. Because the entire property had been mowed for so many years, the natural process by which a forest restores itself was completely disturbed, and basically the only trees in the park were mature ones. All new saplings were mowed, disturbing the normal succession in the forest. With the cooperation of the mowers from PARD, the understory of this lovely forest is slowly growing back, and a surprising variety of saplings, small shrubs, wildflowers, and native grasses have returned to the site. On a recent photographic visit to the park, we found over 20 species of trees and shrubs coming up in the formerly mowed space between the existing large trees, including oaks (at least 7 species), sweetgum, elm (2 species), Virginia persimmon, pecan, poplar, sycamore, and redbud. And these were not just tiny seedlings; some of them are already well-defined saplings, taller than a person!



As part of the standard PARD maintenance plan for passive use parks, many dead trees that pose no risk to pedestrians or vehicular traffic are being allowed to remain standing in the park. Dead trees are an integral part of any natural forest, and provide extremely important habitat for a number of animal species that otherwise would have nowhere to live. Woodpeckers, for example, depend on dead trees for nesting sites. Six species of woodpecker have been

(WEST 11th STREET PARK continued on page 7)

6 WOB WATERSHED BIKEWAY PROJECTS UPDATE

by Jim Mackey

This past August, the City of Houston (COH) Bikeway Program hosted the first round of public forums to present the preliminary plans for a number of paved hike-n-bike trail projects in the WOB Watershed. With what the COH is now calling the Accelerated Bikeway Program, plans call for breaking ground citywide on a series of off-street trail projects before the end of 2003. As trail design and engineering plans are finalized, another round of public meetings will be scheduled in the first half of 2003.

MKT/SP Rail to Trail and West Heritage Corridor Trails

The MKT will run approximately from Shepherd to Hogan at WOB. The West Heritage Trail will begin near Stude Park, coursing around the north/east bank of the bayou to UH Downtown meeting up with the MKT at Hogan. The plan still calls for utilizing three or four of the old bayou rail trestles that will be modified to include hinged railing systems that will fold down during high water events. The trails are to be 10 foot wide and constructed of concrete.

While support of these projects is almost unanimous, there are a couple of sticking points. The proposed alignment of the MKT will run the trail along the northern property line of the rail Right-of-way to allow room for a possible future commuter transit system. Heights residents are calling for the trail to be run down the middle of the ROW and elimination of the possible transit corridor. There is also a lack of access to the Heritage Trail from the near north neighborhoods adjacent to Jim Hogg Park and the Thomas Street Clinic.

Little WOB Trail

This trail, which is the first phase of the North Gateway to Downtown vision, will begin at the Cavalcade bikelanes at I-45 and run on the east bank of Little WOB to Enid Street where the trail will become an on-street bike route. The route will terminate near the 610/I-45 interchange. Due to engineering and property issues, it is unfortunate that this trail can not stay on the banks of Little WOB for its entire length. For local history buffs, the Eichwurzel Family Cemetery is located near the end of the route.

West WOB Trail Extension

Every family has a troubled child and that appears to be the case with West WOB Trail Extension. The public forum for this trail has yet to be scheduled. The ongoing controversy over which side of the bayou the trail is to be located is bogged down in negotiations between Council Member Galloway's and COH Bikeway's offices. Bikeway personnel state that a →

WOB FEDERAL PROJECT STATUS UPDATE October 2002

The White Oak Bayou Federal Flood Control Project began in early 1998 in accordance with Section 211 of the 1996 Water Resource Development Act. The project is being conducted by the Harris County Flood Control District (HCFCD), in coordination with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (COE). Four flood control alternatives were presented by HCFCD in public meetings for public comment in November, 2000. WOBA submitted public comments back to HCFCD in 2001 on the four proposed alternative plans. A draft recommended plan (similar to Alternative 1) was submitted by HCFCD to COE in December 2001 for internal review and comment. The COE recently concluded its review of the draft recommended plan in August 2002, and HCFCD is currently addressing these comments.

A Public Advisory Committee meeting was held on October 15, 2002 to update the Committee on the project status. The draft recommended plan continues to be revised as the COE review comments are addressed. The draft recommended plan discussed at the meeting includes the following major components: channel modifications to White Oak Bayou from Cole Creek to Beltway 8; a diversion channel around Jersey Village; detention basins; bridge replacements/modifications and a buyout of approximately 160 homes situated in various locations along the Bayou. However, some of these components, such as bridge replacements/modifications, may not be included in the final recommended plan. Rather, they could become locally-funded projects on a case-by-case basis.

HCFCD expects to re-submit the draft recommended plan for COE review around March 2003. It hopes to acquire federal approval of the finalized plan with reimbursements starting in 2004. Construction of various components of the draft recommended plan has occurred since 1984 and is ongoing at this time, in advance of federal approval or federal funding. If you have any questions or comments about this project, you may contact HCFCD, Attention: Director of Communications, 9900 Northwest Freeway, Houston, Texas 77092.

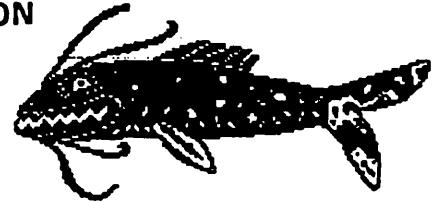
A HCFCD representative will be making a brief presentation at the WOBA Annual Meeting on November 13, 2003 at the Heights Fire Station. ↗

public meeting will be held before year's end. I would encourage those who have a stake in this project to contact CM Galloway and the director of the COH Dept of Public Works. ↗

If you would like to join WOBA, please fill out the membership form below and mail to:
 White Oak Bayou Association, PO Box 920510, Houston, TX 77292-0510. Thank you.



**WHITE OAK BAYOU ASSOCIATION
 MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION**



Date: _____

GENERAL INFORMATION:

Name _____
 Name: Wife/ Husband _____ Children _____
 Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____
 Email _____
 Sub-Division _____ Area: NW __ NE __ SW __ SE __
 Parks close to me _____
 Work/Company _____
 Phone : Home (____) _____ Work (____) _____
 Fax (____) _____ Pager (____) _____
 Interest: _____

MEMBERSHIP CATEGORY:

| | | | | | |
|------------|---------------|---|--------------|-----------|--|
| _____ \$10 | Tadpole |  | _____ \$100 | Catfish |  |
| _____ \$25 | Minnow | | _____ \$200 | Brim | * |
| _____ \$35 | Alligator Gar |  | _____ \$500 | Bass | * |
| _____ \$50 | Carp | | _____ \$1000 | Gold Fish | * |

(* Your name/co. will be added to our Newsletter and Stationary, unless not wanted)

I WANT TO PARTICIPATE IN MY ASSOCIATION:

| | | |
|----------------------|------------------------------|--------------------|
| _____ Write Letters | _____ Nature Walks | _____ Bikeways |
| _____ Recycling | _____ Pilot with Airplane | _____ Parks |
| _____ Survey | _____ Public Speaking | _____ Canoeing |
| _____ Bike Hikes | _____ Planting Trees | _____ Historian |
| _____ Newsletter | _____ Planting Wildflowers | _____ Membership |
| _____ Fund Raising | _____ Public Relations | _____ Archaeology |
| _____ Construction | _____ Annual Meeting | _____ Photography |
| _____ Press Releases | _____ Distribute Newsletters | _____ Wetlands |
| _____ Phone Calls | _____ Annual Fish Off | _____ Secretary |
| _____ Decorations | _____ Annual Meeting | _____ Dinners |
| _____ Treasurer | _____ Landscape Design | _____ Conservation |
| _____ Other _____ | | |

COMMENTS:

(WEST 11TH STREET PARK continued from page 4)

seen in the park, and anyone who walks around the park will surely have noticed some of them. In fact, our little park is now known in the Houston birding community as one of THE best places to see the spectacular (and not particularly common) red-headed woodpecker. The huge pileated woodpecker, similarly rare in most of Houston, is also fairly common in the park. The woodpeckers are in our park BECAUSE of the dead trees; without them, these wonderful creatures would disappear. Furthermore, other animals, especially flying squirrels, make use of abandoned woodpecker nests. And our resident great horned owl seems particularly to prefer a perch high in some of the dead pines along the north side of the park. Even fallen trees provide habitat for many insects, nesting birds, etc., and as they decay release nutrients and organic matter that improve the soil and help surrounding plants to grow.



Small existing footpaths that were made over the years by continued usage have been widened, enabling walkers, runners, and dog owners to more easily enjoy the forest. Once on these trails, you enter into the kind of natural space that has largely disappeared inside the loop. It is possible to forget that you are only minutes away from the downtown area of the fourth largest city in America.

The West 11th Street Park is located at 2400 West 11th Street, two blocks west of White Oak Bayou. Trail outlets are located on the west, north, and east sides of the park. 🐾

BARRIE ZIMMELMAN URBAN ACTIVIST

On May 22, 2002, Houston's environmental community lost one of its most active and beloved members, Barrie Zimmelman. WOBA fondly remembers her as our association historian of many years.



Born November 2, 1924 in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, Barrie was raised and educated in Buenos Aires, Argentina. A graduate of Brawn Mawr College with a BA in History and Economics, Barrie worked in Washington D.C. during the Truman and Eisenhower Administrations.

After coming to Houston in 1962, Barrie became interested in revitalizing downtown Houston. As the executive director of CIVIC Houston she was instrumental in preserving the Old Market Square district and was one of the original organizers of the International Festival and Old Market Square Sidewalk Art Show.

Barrie's vision and constant efforts were the inspiration that formed the group Citizens Who Care which evolved into the Citizens Environmental Coalition, now an umbrella organization that coordinates nearly 100 nonprofit environmental groups. From 1984 to 1988, Barrie worked for the city's planning department, coordinating archaeological, historical and developmental interests.

Barrie traveled extensively and was keenly interested and supportive of the Houston Symphony, Houston Grand Opera and the local art community while also being an avid photographer herself.

She lived her life with caring friends and beloved pets, taking time to work, play, read, socialize, dream, love, laugh and contribute back to her community. We will miss her very much. 🐾

TRASH BASH 2003 & TRASH BASH 2002 RECAP

Have you gone out to purchase your new 2003 calendar yet? Well, turn to "March," and in the bottom right corner where it says "29," take a colorful magic marker to write "TRASH BASH." Yep, it's never too early to get pumped up for the most successful watershed clean-up in Texas. This year the River, Lakes, Bays 'N Bayous Trash Bash™ will be scheduled for Saturday, March 29, 2003. Please plan to attend the White Oak Bayou watershed site of your choice. Choice? Why yes! This coming year you can choose to participate at the Little White Oak Bayou Trash Bash at Moody Park or you can go to the Little Thicket satellite site or another new site, the Woodlands Trail North/ White Oak Bayou North.

You will have a blast helping rid our watershed of debris and other non-point source pollution. We've got the photos to prove it! Take a look at some pictures from the 2002 Little White Oak Bayou Trash Bash at Moody Park.



Volunteers **Russell Gonzalez, Bea & Chris Rosales, Nurse Debbie Tesar, Kathleen Jircik, and Kathy Bench** assisted more than 350 trash bashers to register.

Marcos Guerrero returned for the fourth year in a row to supervise the collection of bags. This time he commandeered his nephews **Bryan & Michael Mullen** to assist him.



Trash bashers collected approximately **11.3 tons** of litter from the Little White Oak Bayou watershed.

Thanks to **Harry Thomas** of METRO who always makes sure that people can eat lunch with clean hands. METRO is a local sponsor that provides the power washer. The day of the Trash Bash, Route Maintenance Foreman Harry Thomas cleans all the METRO stops on Route 15 around Moody Park.

Volunteers from the Northside Redevelopment Center, **John Garza, Vincent Marquez, Geneva Holland, Michael Peacock, Nick Somarakis, Oneida Frausto, Lindy To, and "Uncle Steve"** served drinks from **Dr Pepper** and some righteous hot dogs.

Trash bashers had the opportunity to visit the **Bayou Buddy** section sponsored by **CMS Oil & Gas Company** and the **White Oak Bayou Association**. Thank you to volunteers: **Teresa Matlock, Rebecca Curry, Michele Baker, Sandra Garcia, and Amy Sackett** for staffing the gummy worm fishing booth, face painting, recycled art activities, the watershed demonstration and explaining the role of CMS in the field.

Youth and adults visited booths sponsored by the **Houston Zoomobile, Avenue CDC, the Environmental Health Dept., State Rep. Jessica Farrar, Houston-Galveston Area Council, Natural Legacy, Neighborhood Protection Division, Texas Clean Water Action, Wildlife Rehab & Education, and the MD Anderson YMCA.**

(TRASH BASH continued on page 9)

(TRASH BASH continued from page 8)

Chronicle Editor **Ronnie Crocker** emceed the event and directed the door prize contest. Prizes were donated by **River, Lakes, Bays 'N Bayous Trash Bash™**, **Little White Oak Bayou Association**, **Buchanan's Native Plants**, **Quality Feed & Supply**, **11th Street Café**, and **Rio Posada Restaurant**.

State Representative **Jessica Farrar** was on-hand to deliver state recognition to the middle-school age youth from the **Houston Outdoor Learning Academy** for their proposal to help stop non-point source pollution in the **White Oak Bayou** watershed. The school received a grant from both the **White Oak Bayou Association** and **River, Lakes, Bays 'N Bayous Trash Bash™**.



Thank you to **Carolyn Lambeth** for taking the photos and to the many other Trash Bash site-volunteers including **Susan Granbery**, **Patricia Shepherd**, **Pete Little**, and **L.T.** Thank you to **Councilman Gabriel Vasquez** for supporting the annual **Little White Oak Bayou Trash Bash** at **Moody Park**. We appreciate the efforts of **Carlos Galan**, **Moody Park Manager & Holly Beretto** with the **Parks Dept.** for their involvement in the successful event and the **Houston Police Department/Heights & Wesley House Storefronts** for providing security. We are grateful to **Cesar Rodriguez** for hosting a volunteer appreciation dinner at **Doneraki Restaurant** on **Fulton**.

Please plan on attending the next **River, Lakes, Bays 'N Bayous Trash Bash™** **Saturday, March 29, 2003**. This annual event is all volunteer driven and →

CYCLOCROSS? RACE!

United Youth Sports (UYS) Inc. Cycling Team is promoting a cyclocross race to be held at **TC Jester Park** on **Sunday, Dec 1, 2002**, starting at **8 AM**. **UYS** is a nonprofit organization dedicated to encouraging youth to live a healthier and more active lifestyle through exposure and involvement in a variety of sport and outdoor activities. Cyclocross is a unique form of bicycle racing that combines riding, dismounting and requires riders to run over barriers while carrying their bikes. This form of racing has been popular in Europe for years and is rapidly becoming more popular in the US. At **TC Jester Park**, riders will course through the trails and grassy areas at the south end of the park as well as ride and run up and down the bayou bank a number of times. The action is fast and fun. Please come out and cheer the racers on! To participate, a rider must have a **USA Cycling License** (one day license available on site), a **helmet** and oh yea, a **bike**. For more info, contact **Scott Schaeffer** at mtbscott@swbell.net. 🚲



funded by private donations. If you or your company would like to help sponsor this educational, hands-on event, call **Amy Smith** at the **Houston Galveston Area Council** (asmith@hgac.cog.tx.us). For more information, log onto www.trashbash.org. You can also contact **Shanna Crawford Barnstone** for the **Little White Oak Bayou** site (shanna@academicplanet.com), **Heather Lazare** for the **Little Thicket** site (hflazare@amerion.com), or **Alejandra DeGraff** for the **Woodlands Trail North/White Oak Bayou North** site (adegraff@aldine.k12.tx.us). 🚲

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR PROJECTS IN LITTLE THICKET PARK

by Nancy Wilcox

We are looking for volunteer groups to work on the restoration of Little Thicket Bayou Park. A City of Houston Park located along a stretch of the original White Oak Bayou channel, Little Thicket is the beneficiary of a grant from the Galveston Bay Estuary Program. WOBA, as part of the advisory group assembled by the Bayou Preservation Association (BPA), has committed that several tasks will be accomplished in the park. They include developing a habitat restoration design plan that will include solutions for erosion problems. The BPA has contracted with Keith Bowers, a riparian fluvial geomorphologist, to create stream restoration solutions for the Little Thicket Bayou Park. Some of the goals for the design are to stabilize erosion, improve water quality, improve habitat for plants and animals, and to maximize storm water storage. We are now ready to proceed with the work of the grant. Several projects for volunteers have been identified. Take a look at the projects below gather, your troops, and let us know in which one you would like to participate.

The projects include:

- A small demonstration project incorporating planting in the 23rd Street swale will both clean storm water run-off and control erosion.
- Planting a butterfly garden stretching the full length of the western boundary of the park will add a beautiful space for butterflies and birds.
- A massive tree planting establishing a grove of cypress in the bottom at the southern end of the park is always a favorite dream of the volunteers. We may well target this project as an Arbor Day event.
- Removal of undesirable non-native plant species is an on-going effort. Roland Kapalski is currently removing non-native plants and re-establishing native plants as his Boy Scout Eagle Project. His is the first of much effort needed to restore the native plants to the park.
- Trail building will enhance access to the more rugged reaches of the park.

These and other projects are funded and awaiting the volunteers to help to bring the vision to life. Please contact Nancy Wilcox, 713-869-8412, and Heather Lazare, 713-880-9376.



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