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SPRING 1993

NEWSLETTER

volume 11, number 1

A LETTER FROM OUR PRESIDENT, BILL FONTENOT

Beyond serving on a few committees with a few organizations, it's been over twenty years since I have served as an officer of any group. The last time that happened, I was Student Council president at my old high school in Ville Platte. My term quickly became embroiled in two controversial issues: acquiring a jukebox for our school concession area, and a rather nasty petition for allowing boys to wear blue jeans (it was a Catholic school, you understand). If memory serves me well, the former resolution passed (note: as self-designated Chairman of the Music Selection Committee, at least one full row of selections consisted of epic performances by Credence Clearwater Revival; like our native plant community, this group was sorely overshadowed by the likes of the Beatles, Rolling Stones, and other exotic imports). The latter resolution was miserably and quickly defeated during a frantically-organized faculty meeting. Those of you who are familiar with my present-day behavior can now appreciate that I've only partially recovered from this devastating loss.

But not to worry, friends. Being on the wrong end of almost every popular issue since that time has taught me much. The paramount lesson learned in this school of hard knocks is that, regardless of the issue and of its importance to our future, it is our attitudes toward the issue and toward its detractors which ultimately dictates its successful resolution. So powerful is our collective attitude toward a particular issue that it can actually create an opposing camp of detractors! In this way, the American Civil Liberties Union begat the John Birch Society; the Earth First! movement begat the Wise Use movement; Sonny begat Cher, and the band plays on. Don't get me wrong. Having a strong set of beliefs and values, regardless of what side of the fence they fall on, is not the problem. The problem lies in one's attitude toward those who disagree. When disrespectful and discourteous attitudes rule both sides of any issue, the best that we can hope for is a stalemate, the worst, war.

The Louisiana Native Plant Society was organized for the purpose of conserving wild plants through preservation, propagation, and education. As is the case with most organizations, opinions concerning how we carry out this mission vary widely within our membership. And as many of you have probably observed by now, it is for this reason that it becomes so difficult for any organization to accomplish much in terms of solving specific problems via committees, sub-committees, task forces, resolutions, declarations, petitions, etc., etc., etc.

Yes, in reality I do see a reason for rhetoric, posturing, and confrontation - particularly when attempting to accomplish something in our governmental arena (and I do mean ARENA). But does such negativity need to routinely find its way into a simple appreciation society? While I do agree that both government and industry must change with respect to the future well being of our natural environment, I also firmly believe that if my life depended on capturing flies, I'll be dadblamed if I'd use vinegar to do so. Just as with our organization, governmental agencies and corporations are comprised of people; people who need friendship, support, and education - not vinegar - from other people. This is how people grow. This is how people solve problems - from the inside out, not from the outside in. Let the LNPS be a haven for inspiration, refreshment, fellowship, and education for its members and guests. In return, let each of those members (not just officers and board members) go out into society and bring inspiration, refreshment, fellowship, and education to others. Like the Beatles said, "I get by with a little help from my friends." Or was that Credence Clearwater Revival?

1993 OFFICERS ELECTED

President:	Bill Fontenot (Ph. 318-235-6181)
Vice-President:	Dr. Charles Allen
Secretary:	Beth Erwin (Ph. 318-281-6783)
Treasurer:	Ella Price (Ph. 318-929-3984)
Editor:	David Heikamp (Ph. 504-831-2342)

New Board Members (3-year terms):
Terry Erwin
Peggy Reed
Dr. R. Dale Thomas

DUES REMINDER

Don't forget that membership dues for 1993 are due by the first of the year, January 1, 1993! Members who have not paid their dues by April 1, 1993 will be dropped from the roster. Please send your dues to the address below. If you know someone who is interested in joining the LNPS, give them the following address. Make checks payable to the LNPS:

LNPS
Rt. 1, Box 195
Saline, Louisiana 71070

The dues schedule is as follows: Student=\$5.00, Senior Citizen=\$5.00, Individual=\$10.00, Family=\$15.00, Organization=\$25.00, Sustaining=\$50.00, Corporate=\$100.00.

DEADLINES FOR NEXT 4 NEWSLETTERS:

Don't forget! In an effort to better coordinate the distribution of information concerning field trips as well as other dated information the newsletter uses the following deadline policy. Any information received after

the deadline will be included in the next newsletter . Deadlines for the next four newsletters are as follows:

Fall Newsletter:	September 1, 1992
Winter Newsletter:	December 1, 1992
Spring Newsletter:	March 1, 1993
Summer Newsletter:	June 1, 1993

The editor's address is:

David Heikamp
717 Giuffrias
Metairie, La. 70001
Ph (504) 831-2342

NATIVE PLANTS AND CAJUN FUN

The Gulf Coast Regional Native Plant Conference will be held this summer, June 9th through 12th on the University of Southwestern Louisiana campus in Lafayette, Louisiana. The thrust of the conference will center around the "community concept" of native plant design, propagation, and usage. The conference will explore aspects of community identification, design, restoration, cultivation, and maintenance as well as provide valuable information concerning many additional native plant usages such as wildlife attraction and "folk" foods and medicines. Ample exhibits as well as a diverse selection of field trips will be offered.

University housing (air conditioned) and meal tickets are available at a minimal charge. Two nights of cajun music and seafood are included in the registration fee. Conference participation is limited to the first 300 applicants. Call (318) 235-6181 or write to the following address for more information:

Native Plant Conference
Lafayette Natural History Museum
637 Girard Park Drive
Lafayette, La. 70503

ZEMURRAY GARDENS NEWS

Zemurray Gardens will be open for the annual blooming season from February 20 through April 11, 1993. Daily hours are 10:00 AM until 6:00 PM, weather permitting.

The gardens are located on Highway 40. The exit off Interstate 12 is the Robert exit taking Highway 445 north through Robert, Louisiana to Highway 40 West. Exits off Interstate 55 which can be used are the Tickfaw exit taking Highway 442 East to Highway 40 or the Independence exit taking Highway 40 East.

The gardens encompass 150 acres of azaleas, camellias, dogwood, pine, and native plants. Trails wander through a natural setting and encircle their way around a 20 acre lake appropriately named, Mirror Lake. The reflection of breathtaking colors can be seen on the surface of the lake from every viewpoint around its perimeter. There are a number of points of interest along the trails where life-size, mythological statues cast in France have been placed.

Ample parking is available. Picnic tables are located adjacent to the

parking area. The entrance fee is \$3.00 for adults and \$2.00 for children under 12 and for senior citizens. For more information please contact:

Bennett & Peters, Inc.
Route 1, Box 201
Loranger, Louisiana 70446
Phone (504) 878-6731

FRIENDS OF HILLTOP ARBORETUM SPRING GARDEN SERIES

Friends of Hilltop Arboretum have announced their spring garden tour series. The first tour is scheduled for March 21st, the second for April 25th. Tickets for the series may be purchased at two locations in Baton Rouge: Dixon Smith Interiors, 1655 Lobdell Avenue and Farm & Village, 711 Jefferson Highway. Tickets (\$20 plus 50 cents purchasing and handling) may also be purchased by writing to:

Friends of Hilltop Arboretum
P.O. Box 82608
Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70884