

The Bayou & Beyond

A NEWSLETTER OF THE BUFFALO BAYOU PARTNERSHIP

JULY 2010

Dear Friends:

Spring is always a glorious time of year in Houston and especially along Buffalo Bayou. This year there was an unusually brilliant display of plants and flowers, as well as colorful birds.

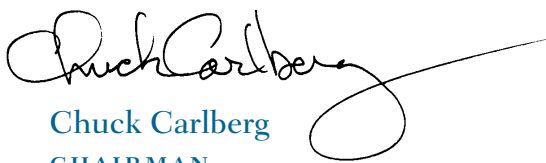
Besides the abundant flora and fauna, numerous development projects have been "sprouting up" along the waterway's banks. Currently, more than \$6 million worth of improvements are under construction with more on the way. All of these efforts, which have been in the planning stages for many years, will provide valuable connections to nearby neighborhoods and other Buffalo Bayou trail segments.

Our newsletter, *Bayou Blooms and Booms*, highlights Buffalo Bayou's lush green landscape and provides information on the significant projects that are underway to make our city's waterway more accessible and beautiful.

Regardless of the season, we hope you get out and enjoy Buffalo Bayou... either by walking, jogging, canoeing or taking a sightseeing trip on our pontoon boat, *The Osprey*.

You'll be amazed at what you see!!!

Sincerely,



Chuck Carlberg
CHAIRMAN



Anne Olson
PRESIDENT



Bayou Violet - *Viola langloisii*



Blue Headed Vireo



Purple Phacelia - *Phacelia bipinnatifida*



Brown Pelican



Texas Lantana - *Lantana horrida*



Indigo Bunting



Louisiana Iris - *Iris fulva* at Tapley Tributary



White Ibis at Buffalo Bend Nature Park



Pickerel Weed - *Pontederia cordata* at Buffalo Bend Nature Park

The Bayou Blooms

Colorful blooms covered the bayou landscape this spring. Among our favorites is the delicate, yet hardy Bayou Violet. Growing in moist woodlands and thickets, we are so pleased that the plant is calling Buffalo Bayou home. Because of our waterway's rich native plant life, an increasing number and variety of birds have been sighted, including Scarlet Tanagers, Summer Tanagers, Indigo Buntings and Gray Catbirds. And did you know that several bayou areas are considered migratory flyways?

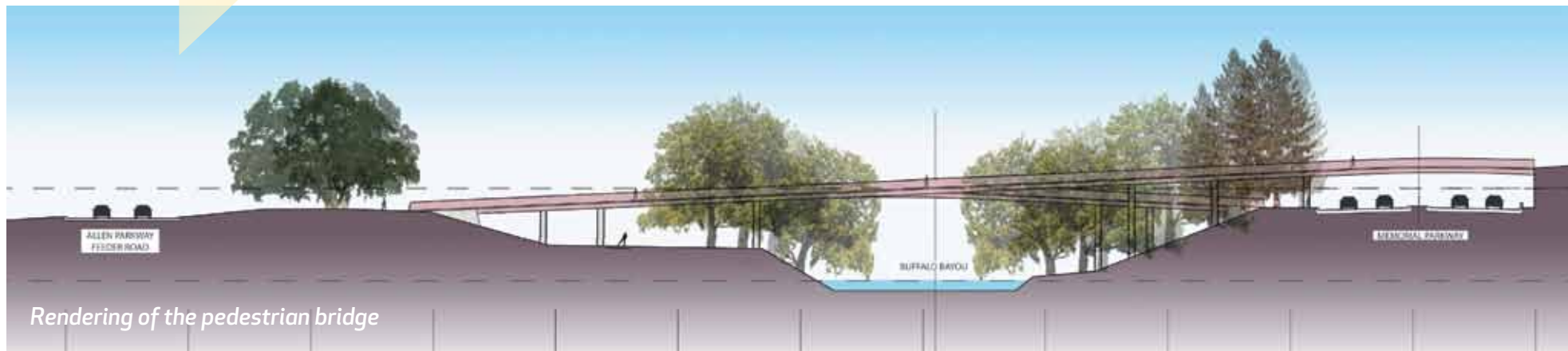
To highlight Buffalo Bayou's natural flora, BBP has developed an herbarium that includes trees, vines, wildflowers, understory and shrubs, and aquatic and wetland plants. Each plant is catalogued with the following information: habitat, taxonomy, conservation status and natural history. Pressed according to American Botanic Society archival standards, the specimens are housed at the BBP office and also are displayed online (www.buffalobayou.org/conservation). By summer's end, we hope to have an inventory of bayou birds posted on our website, as well.

The Bayou Booms...

BAYOU BRIDGE

Just east of Studemont, a pedestrian bridge will provide important connectivity to Allen Parkway and bayou trails. The 700 ft. lighted sky-walk will offer a place to pause and celebrate the downtown skyline and the Buffalo Bayou corridor. At three landings (most bridges have

only two), small shaded and lighted plazas with benches will provide spots for taking a break and people watching. The brushed stainless steel bridge will be 100 percent fabricated and erected by Houston companies.



Rendering of the pedestrian bridge

TRAILS

A series of new trails will connect to existing trails, street-level sidewalks, and to the following adjacent neighborhoods: Montrose, Sixth Ward, Heights, and Rice Military.

Although small in distance, the connectors will offer enormous benefits.

"Neighborhoods north and south of Buffalo Bayou have experienced significant growth," points out Jane Cahill, chair of Super

Neighborhood #22, a coalition of neighborhoods located along the Washington Avenue Corridor.

"Residents are thrilled that they will now have better access to this incredible recreational amenity."



Connecting

the Spots

A pedestrian bridge and several hike and bike trails are now under construction along the bayou's west sector. These projects will provide important connections for neighborhood residents living north and south of the bayou, and help joggers and bicyclists travel more safely to other parks and destinations along the waterway.

Funding of nearly \$5 million for the new improvements is coming from the Memorial Heights Tax Increment Reinvestment Zone.



Early pedestrian bridge and trail construction

Memorial and Spotts parks will be connected to the bayou trail system for the first time. Crossing under the Shepherd Drive Bridge, a new trail will allow bicyclists and joggers to safely connect to Memorial Drive sidewalks and on to Memorial Park, a trip that has been extremely dangerous in the past when crossing at the busy intersection of Shepherd and Memorial drives.

Memorial Park trail connection at Shepherd Drive

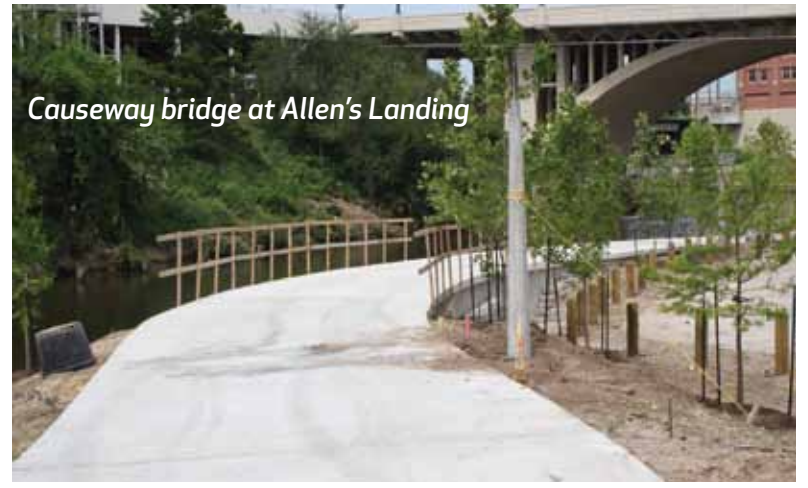


DOWNTOWN

Downtown's waterfront continues to be revitalized at Allen's Landing, our city's founding site and first port. Work is nearing completion on a \$1.5 million extension of the park's embarcadero. In addition to expanding the 25-ft. wide promenade, lighting, landscaping, and a small causeway bridge that will take drainage under the promenade and into the bayou are part of the project. Although small in length, this extension is one step closer to linking Allen's Landing to Sesquicentennial Park and westward all the way to Shepherd Drive. Currently, a very difficult connection under Milam and Smith streets is needed to make the connection.



Allen's Landing Promenade



Causeway bridge at Allen's Landing

Planned Projects

In addition to the Buffalo Bayou west sector projects under construction, several more are planned for the near future.

Tapley Tributary

Renovation of the Tapley Tributary, located just west of the Sabine Street Bridge, will take place this summer. Among the slated improvements are restoration of the turtle pond, installation of a footbridge, and extension of the site's tree canopy to create a haven for migratory birds. This project is made possible by a \$100,000 grant from the Texas General Land Office Coastal Management Program and matching funds from the Jacob & Terese Hershey Foundation and the River Oaks Garden Club.

Flood Control Project

By late summer, an important stream restoration project, led by the Harris County Flood Control District, will be underway. Designed to increase flood water conveyance capacity, the 1200 sq. ft. demonstration project will also restore native vegetation. Future plans call for extending the flood control work west to Shepherd Drive.

Hike and Bike Trails

Widening and realigning of the existing hike and bike trails along Allen Parkway and Memorial Drive will begin this fall. The long-awaited project is being funded with a \$4.4 million federal transportation grant and a \$1.3 match from the City of Houston.

Ballet Comes to the Bayou's Banks

Houston Ballet's \$53 million Center for Dance, now under construction, is located along the banks of Buffalo Bayou and in the heart of downtown's theater district, across the street from

presentations and rehearsals, a small residential area, and administrative offices.

According to C.C. Conner, Houston Ballet Managing Director, an important goal for the Center is to create a popular destination that is directly linked to city life. As a result, the project design team worked with Buffalo Bayou Partnership to create a linkage from the new building to a future hike and bike trail below. In the near future, the Texas Department of Transportation will build stairways providing an additional connection from the Center for Dance to the bayou. Another important

Baker Statue

To commemorate the illustrious political career of James Baker, our nation's 61st Secretary of State, a statue will soon be installed along Buffalo Bayou in Sesquicentennial Park. In addition to his place on the world stage, Baker and four generations of his family have played an important role in Houston's history. The statue, created by artist Chas Fagan of Charlotte, North Carolina, complements the George W. Bush statue that is sited across the bayou in Sesquicentennial Park. The \$1.2 million civic art installation, which also includes landscaping and lighting, will be completed this fall.



Houston Ballet Center

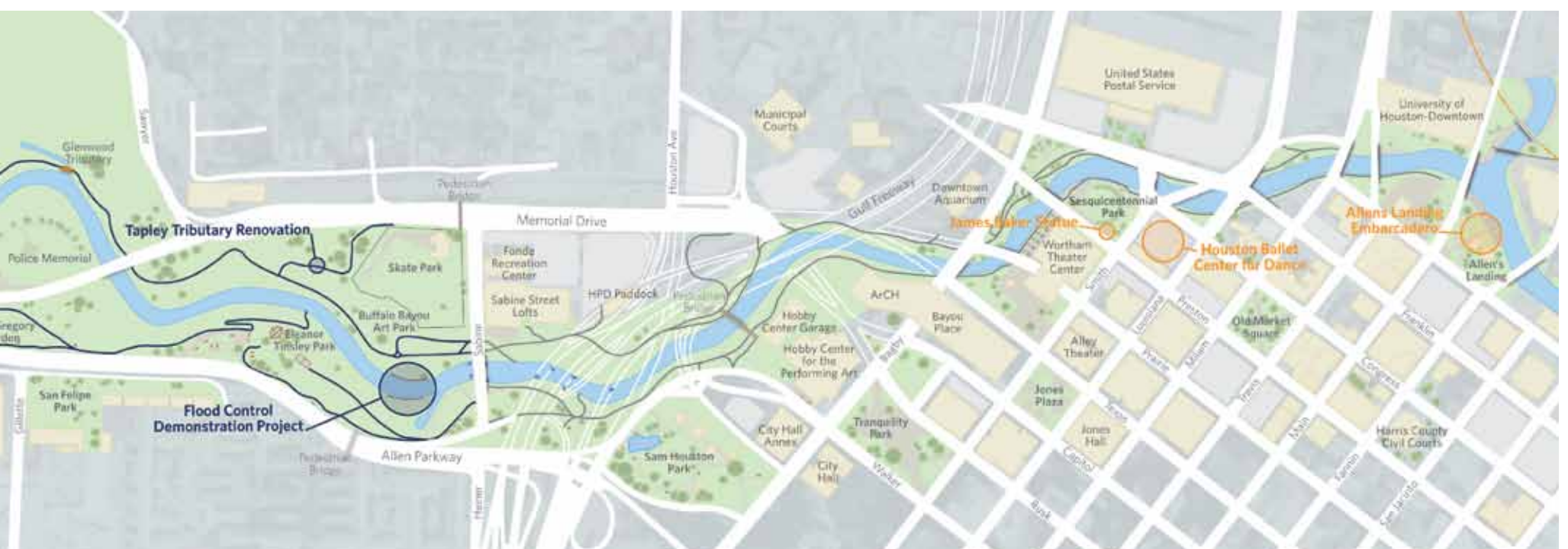


Wortham Theater Center. The 115,000 sq. ft. six-story facility is a state of the art sustainable building housing nine dance studios, a blackbox laboratory for

connection is the open-air skybridge linking the facility to the Wortham Center, the ballet's primary performance venue.



April groundbreaking



38th Annual Buffalo Bayou Regatta – Beautiful Weather and a Record Year!

We could not have asked for better weather at this year's Regatta – over 600 paddlers crossed the finish line at Sesquicentennial Park. It was a record year, with over 400 boat entries. Competitors, ranging from first-time paddlers enjoying the bayou views to those racing along at full speed, made the 15-mile trip from San Felipe to downtown.

Finish line festivities included lively zydeco music, food and drinks, awards ceremony, and a chance to see the colorful canoes and kayaks up close.

Carter Johnson was this year's overall winner. Carter paddled in his International Canoe Federation solo kayak (ICF K-1) and finished the race in 1:32:04. As the top winner, Carter is now the proud owner of Austin Canoe & Kayak's Manitou 13' – the Regatta's top speed prize!

Congrats also go to our Styrofoam Cup award winners, Gillian Crucey and Harvey English who picked up the most trash along the bayou during their 15-mile journey.



Runners up were Lisa Waskom and John Mastroianni with Weston Solutions Inc. with their grocery cart found along the way! Also, Howard Merrill and his daughter Maggie, who picked up a unique collection of children's toys, which they dubbed "Kiddie Junk."

Buffalo Bayou Partnership thanks the many generous companies and individuals who made this year's Regatta such a success including our Race Director, Carl Gilson, our Corporate Cup and in-kind sponsors and our wonderful volunteers.

Thanks to our Corporate Cup sponsors!

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SPECIAL THANKS to Lead Optimize for its Regatta marketing support.

Bayou Bash 2010



Over 400 Bayou Buddies and friends gathered on the banks of Buffalo Bayou to frolic in the spring sunshine. Attendees enjoyed crawfish and libations from Real Ale Brewing and Redwood Creek, while listening to Band 4AM and Baker Hotel Band, and playing lawn games, enjoying pontoon boat rides, and bidding on the event raffle. Bayou Buddies raised over \$13,000 for the transformation and revitalization of Buffalo Bayou. Thanks to all who attended and made this such a special afternoon on Buffalo Bayou! Special thanks to sponsors, supporters, and raffle donors!

Thank you to our generous sponsors: Bayou Buddies Steering Committee, Katy Optiks, Legacy at Memorial, CREW Health and Fitness, Data Display Audio Visual, AMLI Memorial Heights, Ideal Printers, Inc., Stephanie Macey, TBG Partners, Brian Thorp, and Gabe Zamora

Special thanks to: Brian O'Neill's Running Club, LADD Photography, Real Ale Brewing Company, Redwood Creek Wines, and Yelp.

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PARTNERSHIP

MISSION STATEMENT Buffalo Bayou Partnership is the non-profit organization revitalizing and transforming Buffalo Bayou, Houston's most significant natural resource.

The Partnership coordinates the integration of major amenities into the bayou greenbelt and seeks ways to increase community involvement through pedestrian, boating and biking amenities, permanent and temporary art installations, and other natural and built attractions.

www.buffalobayou.org



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