

The **BAYOU** & beyond

A Newsletter of the Buffalo Bayou Partnership
Summer 2004

\$15 million Sabine-to-Bagby Waterfront Park Under Construction

Excerpt from *The Houston Chronicle*
editorial page, Saturday, May 1, 2004

Next Big Thing

Buffalo Bayou redevelopment should be top priority

In an era of budget shortfalls and pinched city services, Houston must set priorities. With the first light-rail line completed and expansions approved by voters, redevelopment of Buffalo Bayou should be this city's next big thing. In April, ground was broken on Sabine-to-Bagby Park...

At the groundbreaking, Mayor Bill White noted that the city was born on the banks of the bayou. He predicted that its rebirth will happen along the bayou. The experience of other cities that have cleaned and embraced once spurned waterways argues that the mayor is right...

Bayou redevelopment in a few years will provide miles of continuous trails linking parks and neighborhoods east and west of downtown, creating an amenity for all Houstonians and visitors.

Compared to the cost of freeways, sports stadiums and other municipal infrastructure and amenities, beautification of Buffalo Bayou appears to be a bargain.



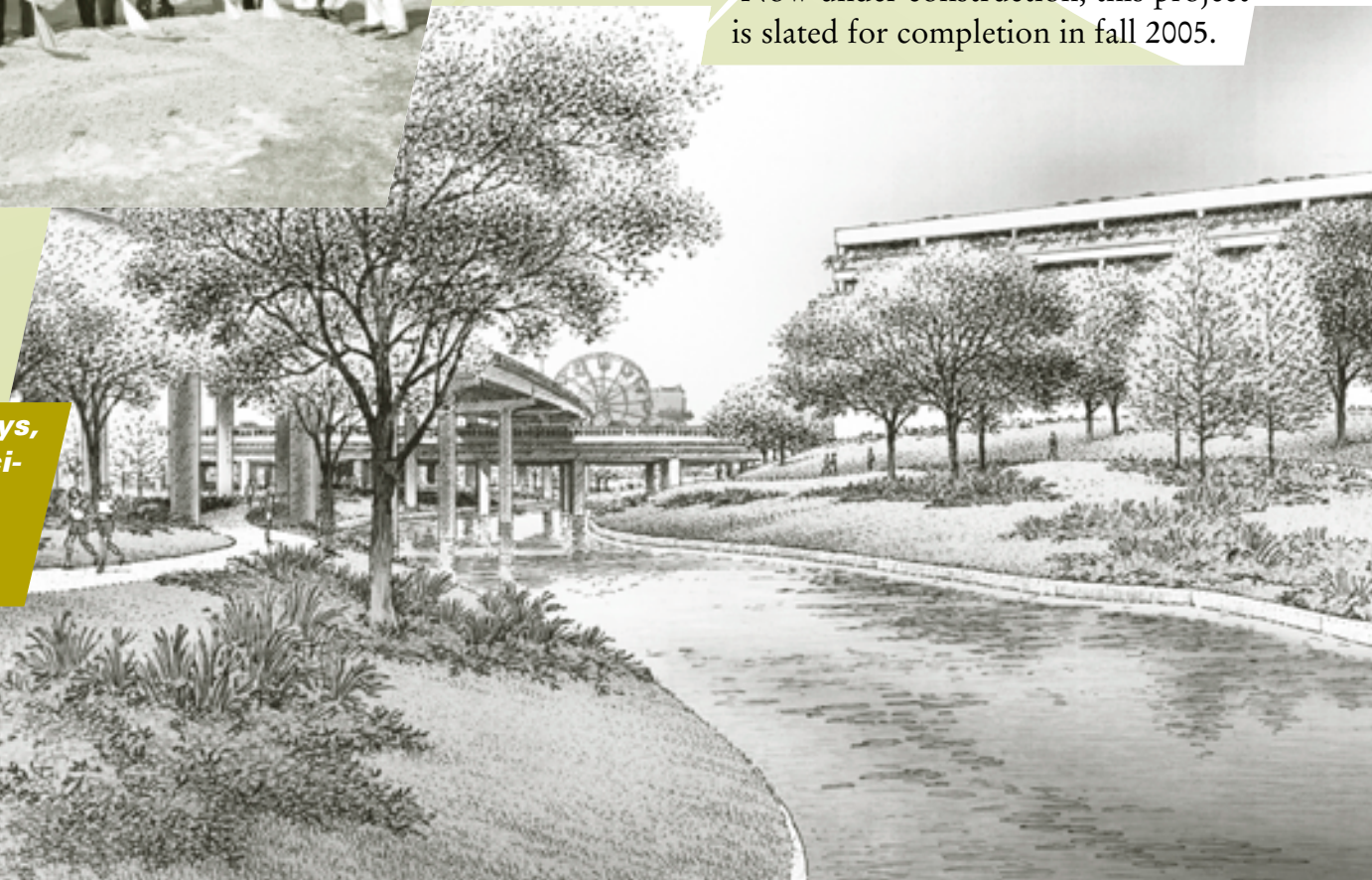
"This city was born along the bayou, and I think its rebirth is going to happen along the bayou." With that statement, Mayor Bill White kicked off the groundbreaking for the 23-acre Sabine-to-Bagby Promenade along downtown's waterfront.

Mayor White was joined by other local officials and contributors, County Judge Robert Eckels, TXDOT District Engineer Gary Trietsch, and County Engineer and Harris County Department of Public Infrastructure Executive Director Art Storey. Over 150 guests joined the celebration at the Sabine Street Art Park.

The \$15 million project will include hike and bike trails on both sides of the bayou to link the Allen Parkway trail system with Sesquicentennial Park. The new park will also include bulkhead along the water's edge, 12 new street-to-bayou access points, decorative lighting, native landscaping and other amenities.

This project was generously funded by the City of Houston, Harris County Flood Control District, Texas Department of Transportation, The Brown Foundation, Inc., Houston Endowment Inc., The Wortham Foundation, Inc., and The Margaret and James A. Elkins, Jr. Foundation.

Now under construction, this project is slated for completion in fall 2005.



The Bayou Beckons 2004

There's nothing like a spring storm to remind us that even in our urban jungle Mother Nature still reigns.

Saturday, May 1 would have been one of the biggest regattas to date. Almost 200 boats were registered to paddle 15 miles but everyone was sent home when Houston was flooded by close to three inches of rain that morning. Three inches of rain over the Buffalo Bayou watershed is enough to keep the bayou running at flood stage for a month!

Swamp Monster



The Red Hat Society



Buffalo Bayou Partnership was



with support for this year's regatta

Some organizations host an annual gala, some organize an auction and others a fun run. The Buffalo Bayou Partnership's annual fundraiser is our Regatta – more difficult to organize perhaps, but judging from the close to 400 paddlers signed up this year, well worth the effort.

Unfortunately, the logistics of the race call for all of the expenses to be paid up front – from security, safety and medical personnel to arranging for 100 rented canoes to converge from all over Texas at the race start. Because of the race costs, the rain date has to be on the same weekend and this year even the rain date was flooded. Alas, Houston's die-hard paddlers and first time enthusiasts will have to wait until next year to join the fun.

The Partnership wishes to thank our sponsors for their understanding and patience with our difficult decision and for their generous support:



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Anything That Floats — and

Dozens of Houstonians showed off their artistic and engineering skills on Buffalo Bayou for the annual Anything That Floats Parade. Record numbers of spectators lined the shores of Buffalo Bayou after the Art Car Parade to see the wacky watercrafts. Many thanks to our safety personnel for making sure our artists stayed (mostly) dry.



Anything That Floats/ Art Car After-Party

When dozens of art cars went looking for a place to congregate after the world's greatest Art Car parade, the Buffalo Bayou Partnership jumped at the chance to host such an entourage!

With BBP President Anne Olson and her daughter Lily co-piloting the Toyboata, art cars of all shapes and sizes converged at the Sabine Street Art Park.

Many cheered the Anything That Floats boats along the bayou, others wandered over to see the art performances "The Shadows we Create," and everyone enjoyed the music, food and drink in the park.

Mighty Tidy Turns One!



It's been a year of cleaning the bayou and learning the ropes for the Mighty Tidy and its crew. After a few weeks in the shop, the Mighty Tidy is back at work and cleaning at full speed to celebrate its birthday. The Mighty Tidy and its crew are single-handedly cleaning the litter and refuse from the bayou waters and shores.

Where does all this trash come from? Every time anyone in the entire Buffalo Bayou watershed throws their trash out the window, loses a ball in a street gutter, forgets to pick up their local paper or tosses a cigarette butt onto the sidewalk, all of that trash ends up in our waterway. That's 1200 cubic yards of trash – enough to fill up the infield of Minute Maid Park 4 feet tall.

Because the boat currently docks in the Port of Houston's Turning Basin, it will often fill up a load or two before making it anywhere near central Houston. Imagine how much we could pick up with two or more boats!

Upcoming Events

ALONG THE BAYOU

Buffalo Bayou East End Greenspace Outreach Effort

Saturday, June 26, 8:30 am – 12:30 pm
Ripley House, 4410 Navigation

Council Members Carol Alvarado and Adrian Garcia and Commissioner Sylvia Garcia will co-host a community outreach meeting with the Buffalo Bayou Partnership, Greater East End Management District, Neighborhood Centers, Inc. – Ripley House and the City of Houston Parks and Recreation Department. Join East End residents, businesses and stakeholders as they discuss their needs and wants for East End open space, particularly the land along Buffalo Bayou.

Buffalo Bayou Canoe Tours

Sunday, September 26,
11 am – 3:30 pm

History of Buffalo Bayou and
Lunch at Rainbow Lodge

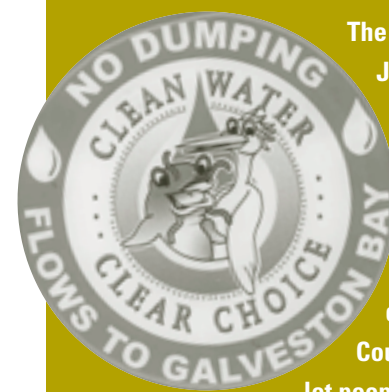
Hear about the unique history of the bayou – from Indians and early settlers to Houston’s more recent characters – from noted historian Janet Wagner and primitive skills expert Neal Stillely. After exploring the bayou, enjoy lunch at the elegant and charming Rainbow Lodge overlooking Buffalo Bayou. \$57 a person including lunch.



Corporate Volunteer Outings

If your company, organization, neighborhood association or other group would like to help us with our beautification projects, please contact wriser@buffalobayou.org for more information.

SWIM Program Launches



The Storm Water Management Joint Task Force has launched their SWIM program and needs volunteers around Houston to sign up! The SWIM program will be marking all the storm drains throughout Harris County with colorful markers to let people know that everything that goes into our storm drains flows straight into Galveston Bay. Of course, in the Buffalo Bayou watershed, everything in our storm drains hits the bayou before emptying into the bay. To find out how you can help mark the drains in your area with FREE markers, log onto www.cleanwaterclearchoice.org or call 713-290-3000.



Irish Spring

Green Dragon



USS Support Our Troops



The Hole in the Wall Gang



Thrash

Highlights included:

The Children’s Museum of Houston had over 30 students under 10 helping to construct their Green Dragon float – and they made it out of recycled political signs and bubble wrap!

Support Our Troops – a scale model of an air force carrier. We are all glad the Air Force boats are slightly more stable!

Thrash won the “I’ve had my tetanus shot” award hands down!

The Webelo Troop 695 made a splash with nine people in their moss-covered Swamp Monster, the people’s choice award for under-16.

The People’s Choice award easily went to the Red Hat Society’s Blazing Paddles, as much for their decorated craft as their on-water dance routine!

The surprise winner was Irish Spring – the subtle humor and elegance of their effort to ‘clean up the bayou’ won the judges over.

Some That Don’t!

The Hole in the Wall Gang won the Creative Locomotion prize – their craft had bilge pumps, tank tracks, water wheels, not to mention a paddle or two.

By far the most patriotic entry was Taylor Castillo and her father Ted’s entry, the USS

Dragon Boat Festival... Finally!



The fourth annual Dragon Boat Festival was scheduled for May 1 alongside the Buffalo Bayou Regatta. Despite the ominous forecast, thousands showed up to watch the races. Unfortunately, after the first few races, the boats were side-lined in the torrential downpours.

Ever resilient, the Houston Dragon Boat Association (HDBA) postponed their festival for the following weekend. Using their newly purchased boat, the HDBA relied on time-trials instead of the traditional multi-boat race. Despite logistical difficulties, the teams were thrilled to participate! Once again, Continental Airlines walked away with the gold.



PHOTOS: BOB EURY

VOLUNTEER CORNER

Thanks to dozens of Houston volunteers, the bayou corridor is looking better than ever! The bayou has been attracting tree-planters, weeders and cleaners all spring.



On March 20, 10 volunteers from ExxonMobil spent a beautiful March morning working on vegetation management – they picked 25 garbage bags of invasive species from the North Side Trail.



Also on March 20, the University of St. Thomas students spent the morning cleaning and weeding the bayou near the Tapley Tributary.



On May 22, dozens of volunteers from Duke Energy and Halliburton cleaned and planted over 100 native trees along the new East Side Trails.



GENEROUS IN-KIND CONTRIBUTORS

While many of our volunteers are working up a sweat along the bayou, dozens of others have been toiling away in offices around Houston giving us in-kind support in marketing and public relations, legal work and real estate help.

Coats, Rose, Yale, Holm Ryman & Lee, P.C.
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Art and the Bayou



Harris County Students Check Out FotoFest Exhibitions at Allen's Landing

About 75 children converged on Allen's Landing in April to see Nils Udo's Landscape with Water and Malachi Farrell's Flag Fish Mourant. The field trip completed a photography curriculum organized by FotoFest and administered by the Harris County Department of Education's Cooperative for After-School Enrichment program. Channel 2 and Telemundo were on hand to capture the children's delight at the robotic fish.

German Water Engineer Herbert Dreiseitl Visits the Bayou

The BBP was fortunate to host German water engineer and artist Herbert Dreiseitl at a community meeting in April focused on the North Side Sewage Treatment Facility. Dreiseitl is internationally recognized for his work in



redeveloping industrial sites for community spaces, particularly those involving waterworks.

Over 30 representatives from the bayou community joined the workshop to brainstorm possible uses for this unique bayou amenity.

Representatives from Houston's Arts Community meet with Minetta Brook

Two New York public art directors, Diane Shamash of Minetta Brook, and Anne Pasternak of Creative Time traveled to Houston to meet with representatives from BBP and Houston's arts community about stimulating public art along the bayou. Minetta Brook is an organization that brings public art to the shores of the Hudson River and works with communities to participate in the process. Creative Time is an organization that supports cutting-edge art in public spaces in New York City. The Buffalo Bayou Partnership's art and design committee is dedicated to bringing temporary and permanent arts to the shores of Houston's waterway.



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"The Buffalo Bayou Partnership serves as an advisory resource and liaison among groups pursuing development of bayou amenities and the many private- and public-sector entities with interests in and/or jurisdictions over various bayou functions. It also coordinates integration of major amenities into the bayou greenbelt and seeks ways to increase community involvement in bayou-related activities."

www.buffalobayou.org

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Or fax credit card information to:
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