



The Cypress Log



A newsletter for and about Jesse Jones Park Volunteers

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281.446.8588

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

What do you know about nature? What do you know about birds? What do you know about snakes? What do you know about insects? What do you know about trees? What do you know about Texas settlers? The biggest question of all is when was the last time YOU volunteered at Jones Park? How can you assist the staff one hour a month?

What is the biggest pay back for YOU? I think it is reaching out to others in your community and spreading the news about Jones Park, then seeing what the park's programs can do for you, your family, your co-workers, and or your neighbors. Then see how your one hour will grow into something very special!

I want to thank ALL Jones Park staff, and especially Darlene, for working hard to stage GREAT events and special programs for volunteer participation.

I hope you have a chance today to look up, see the trees, birds, sunny skies, and the SON! Then look down and see what is crawling on the ground. If it is a snake, I do not want to know. I look forward to seeing YOU at "THE PARK."

Beautiful butterflies to YOU ALL!

Steve Hostetler, JJPV President



Jorge Perez, a Quest Early College High School student, demonstrates corn shelling at Homestead Heritage Day. Photo by Pete Romfh.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

The New Year is off to a swift pace with the usual jam-packed schedule of programs and events. Homestead Heritage Day started out on the chilly side, but the crystal blue sky and warm sun was inviting to the 947 visitors. It was an outstanding event for all. Some may have gotten a unique opportunity to watch Commissioner Jack Cagle apprenticing in the blacksmith shop as he fashioned an authentic belt buckle.

Visitors enjoyed the multitude of demonstrations and the skirmish between the blue and the grey. Both the public and re-enactors offered many compliments. One memorable comment by a re-enactor who stated that years ago as a scout pack leader, she would offer visits to Jones Park as a reward to the cub scouts for good behavior. She relayed that the boys loved coming to the park so much that they eagerly took the challenge. How rewarding to hear of Jones Park's influence on the lives of our youth. The kids are what make it so worthwhile.

Much is on the horizon this spring: **NatureFest on Saturday, March 3 from 9:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.** Volunteer help is much appreciated! **Saturday, March 10 at 10 a.m.** is the much awaited grand opening of the **Spring Creek Greenway Trail**. The public is invited to join Commissioner R. Jack Cagle at Pundt Park to celebrate the official opening of the scenic 7.5 mile trail that offers hiking, biking, and horseback riding from Pundt to Jones Park.

Congratulations to Matt Abernathy, staff naturalist, and wife Sheena on the birth of Samuel, born January 24, 2012. We understand his first outing to Jones Park will be at NatureFest.

Thank you, volunteers, for your faithful support! I'm looking forward to seeing you "getting busy" at the upcoming Jones Park programs and JJPV meetings.

Darlene Conley Hostetler
Park Director

Photo Tips Offered for Shooting Outdoors

With the Jones Park Photo Contest underway, it's good to remember that photography is a hobby for everyone. You may use an expensive DSLR digital camera, a pocket sized point-and-shoot or disposable camera, or camera phone. There are even point-and-shoot cameras for children as young as 3 to enjoy the hobby! Digital cameras are affordable for almost any budget, and there are no more film processing charges, unless you want prints.

Whatever camera you use, know your camera: Read the instruction manual several times. Keep the manual in your camera bag, practice shooting pictures following each step in the manual. It seems very elementary, but will make a great impact in your photography.

One of the most important factors in photography is white balance. White balance is the adjustment made in your camera to accommodate varying types of light. Each type of light has a different temperature and is a different color. Some factors can confuse the auto white balance settings, such as using flash in bright sun, or shade and sun in the same image.

If your pictures look fine on auto white balance, and you are pleased with the images, keep the setting on "auto." If you notice the overall picture is too blue, orange, green or just not right, try changing the white balance setting. Choose the setting that creates an image closest to what you actually see. Check the settings as the light and time of day changes, not just when you want to take a picture. If your camera is "pre-set," you'll be ready for almost any surprise photo opportunity.

With warmer weather coming, it's the perfect time to try nature photography in Jones Park. Dress in layers, wear walking/hiking shoes, pack plenty of water, insect repellent, sunscreen, and fresh camera batteries and extra cards. Glance at the wildlife board for recent sightings, choose a trail, and enjoy the park. There are helpful spotting guides for wildlife in the nature center.

If you would like to learn more about photography, attend a Jones Park Photography Club meeting on the third Tuesday of each month beginning in the nature center from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m., except in the summer. Bring a camera, a desire to learn, and any questions you may have.

Contributed by Kathy Pratt, member of JJPV and Jones Park Photography Club



*Kathy Pratt and son, Kevin, show that people of all ages can learn photography, sharpen their skills, and submit pictures to the Jones Park Photo Contest now underway.
Photo by Pete Romfh*

Time to Click Away for Jones Park Photo Contest

Some of the most charming scenes of the park are captured by camera-ready amateurs armed with curiosity and patience who happen to be in the right place at the right time.

Jones Park's annual Photo Contest provides the perfect incentive for roving the trails looking for a great shot. **Monday, April 30 at 4:30 p.m.** is the deadline for hand-delivered photograph submissions taken within the boundaries of Jones Park between Sunday, May 1, 2011 and Monday, April 30, 2012. (Mailed photos must be postmarked no later than Wednesday, April 25, 2012.)

Photos are accepted in two divisions: Adult, ages 16 and older; and Junior, ages 15 and younger. One photograph may be submitted in each of three categories per division: 1) Wildlife, 2) Scenic/Wildflowers, and 3) People in the Park.

Ribbons will be presented for the best entries in each division at an awards presentation to be held Saturday, May 5 at 1 p.m. in the nature center. Photos will be on display until Sunday, July 1.

One of the best ways to improve your eye for composing a great picture is to hear an expert judge from the community critique the winning entries. The Jones Park Photography Club is another way to capitalize on the shared experience of other shutterbugs. Check the park website at www.hcp4.net/jones for more details on the contest.

What Has Happened to the Bees?

Many visitors to the nature center fondly remember the demonstration bee hive and ask why it was removed. The small size of the box itself combined with the lack of interior combs, condensation buildup from cold ambient temperatures, infiltration of Asian hive beetles and wax moths, ectoparasites (Varroa mites) that further weakened the bees, and outside influences such as aerial mosquito spray all contributed to the repeated demise of replacement queen bees. After many attempts to overcome these obstacles, the decision was made to dismantle the display for a while, in order to let nature rid the area of the pesky hive beetles.

Wild honeybees continue to visit flowers all around the park and can be heard (even in January) buzzing among the red maple trees, pollinating blooms that grace the trees later with their bright red samaras — the helicopter winged seeds.

Bees inhabit every continent except Antarctica, and in every habitat that includes insect pollinated plants. Texas is blessed with rich bee diversity. Although the European honeybee (*Apis mellifera*) is the widest known bee, it represents only one of roughly 20,000 different species. Generally, bees feed on pollen and nectar. Long-tongued bees, such as honey bees and bumblebees, sport a specially adapted proboscis that enables them to obtain nectar from deep within the flower petals. The honey they produce is stashed in special combs within the hive. Having more to lose through predation or disturbance than other kinds of bees makes them prone to aggressively defend their nests.

Bees are also grouped according to social behavior. Eusocial honey bees and bumblebees reproduce with a single mated queen as female offspring work within a sterile caste system for the betterment of the colony. Males, or drones, are produced periodically, and only for the proliferation of the species. In Jones Park the solitary kinds of bees are represented by orchard mason bees and digger bees inhabiting the mud chinking at the log cabin and barn in the homestead.



The hibiscus bee (Philotris bombiformis) somewhat resembles the bumble bee, but is a specialist of hibiscus flowers. Photo by Anita Schiller Howlett



The leafcutter bee (Megachile spp.) builds nests in loose soil or hollows using bits of plants. Photo by Anita Schiller Howlett

Still another variety of solitary bees, the cleptoparasitic bees, lacks the ability to gather pollen. They deposit eggs in other solitary bee nests, thereby ensuring that their offspring will be well fed! This behavior gives rise to their collective name the cuckoo bee.

Entire sciences spanning many volumes chronicle the mindboggling variety of these incredible winged insects. Human fondness for bees is found throughout the ages in poetry and song, but there is no time like the present for those with an open heart and curious mind to explore the fascinating world of bees!

Contributed by Anita Schiller Howlett
Naturalist

Jones Park Programs Month-At-A-Glance

March						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

April						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

May						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

- 03 NatureFest**, 9:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m.
- 10 Gardens For Winged Jewels**, 10 a.m.
- 10 Second Saturday Settlers: Spinning & Weaving**, 1-3 p.m.
- 11 Second Sunday Pickers**, 2-4 p.m.
- 12-16 Spring Breakout**
 - M Wildflower to Mud Pies**, 10 a.m.
 - T Frogs**, 10 a.m. & **Fangs**, 1 p.m.
 - W Homestead Hoedown**, 1-3 p.m.
 - Th Jr. Angler**, 9 a.m.-2 p.m.
 - F Jr. Canoe Training**, 9 a.m.- 2 p.m.
- 17 Canoe Spring Creek**, 9 a.m.
- 18 Canoe Spring Creek**, 2 p.m.
- 19 Monday Morning Birding**, 8 a.m.
- 20 JJP Photo Club**, 2 p.m.
- 24 Adopt-A-Trail Workday**, 9 a.m.-noon
- 26 JJPV Meeting**, 7 p.m.
- 31 Flowering Trails**, 10 a.m.

- 07 Easter Games**, 10 a.m.-noon
- 08 Second Sunday Pickers**, 2-4 p.m.
- 14 Nature Photo Workshop**, 10 a.m.
- Second Saturday Settlers: Primitive Weapons**, 1-3 p.m.
- 16 Monday Morning Birding**, 8 a.m.
- 17 JJP Photo Club**, 2 p.m.
- 21 Fish & Wildlife Merit Badge**, 9 a.m.-2 p.m.
- 28 Pontoon boat Tours**, throughout the day
- 30 JJPV Meeting**, 7 p.m.

- 05 Summer Nature Camp Registration**, 8 a.m.
- Nature Photo Contest Ribbon Presentation**, 1 p.m.
- 12 Second Saturday Settlers: Shingle Making**, 1-3 p.m.
- 13 Second Sunday Pickers**, 2-4 p.m.
- 15 JJP Photo Club**, 2 p.m.
- 19 Animal Tracks & Signs**, 10 a.m.
- 21 Monday Morning Birding**, 8 a.m.
- JJPV Meeting**, 7 p.m.
- 26 Gardening for Winged Jewels**, 10 a.m.



Ongoing Programs

Tadpoles Club: 10:30 a.m. & 1 p.m.
Wednesdays, **March 7, 21 & 28; May 2, 9, 16 and 23**

Homestead Open House: Wednesdays & Sundays, 1-4 p.m.

Bicycling: Sundays, all park trails open from 8 a.m.-noon.

Karl Eisenring Makes S(miles) and S(miles) of Rope

For over 19 years JJPV member Karl Eisenring has been a favorite fixture of Jones Park festivals featuring the settler way of life at the rope making station. He uses about 10,000 feet of binder twine per event to direct rope making for 200-250 kids. Of course, the fun for the kids is all in making the five foot rope themselves which they get to keep. Many a child proudly displays his handmade rope at home in his room.

Karl estimates that he has contributed 332 hours, and has used about 124 bundles of 2,500 feet of twine. By doing the math, this turns out to be 6,200 finished ropes times five feet equaling 31,000 feet of finished rope. **That's 5.9 miles of rope! It means that 58.7 miles of twine has been used to make rope for 6,200 kids at Jones Park!**

Karl never thought he would do this for so many years or make so much rope, but says he still gets excited and loves to hear the kids say, "Do we each get to make one?" or "Can we take it home?" Karl says that it's wonderful to watch the children running around swinging their ropes. "It is a joy to demonstrate and make kids laugh while teaching them a little history and a skill they can enjoy for the rest of their lives. Volunteering is a lot of work, but it is good for the soul and a lot of fun, too!"



JJPV member Karl Eisenring, left, directs rope making from the sidelines after knotting and affixing the twine to the spinner clip and bone.

Photo by Paul Roling

Volunteer Opportunities: Save the Dates!

NatureFest: Saturday, March 3, 9:30 a.m.-4 p.m.

Second Saturday Settlers “Spinners & Weavers:” Saturday, March 10, 1-3 p.m.

Spring Breakout: Monday – Friday, March 12-16. Programs to be held every day.

Adopt-A-Trail Work Day: Saturday, March 24, 9 a.m.-noon.

Easter Games: Saturday, April 7, 10 a.m.-noon.

Nature Tour: Tuesday, April 10, 10 a.m., 4 classes, 2nd grade.

Nature Tour: Thursday, April 12, 10 a.m., 4 classes, 2nd grade.

Second Saturday Settlers “Primitive Weapons:” Saturday, April 14, 1-3 p.m.

Second Saturday Settlers “Shingle Making:” Saturday, May 12, 1-3 p.m.



Volunteer Meetings: Mondays, March 26, April 30, May 21, 7 p.m.

Sign up and suit up!

Call Kaylen at the park – 281.446.8588 or e-mail kfry@hcp4.net.

*Special thanks and appreciation to
Commissioner Cagle and his office.*



R. Jack Cagle, Commissioner

Jesse Jones Park Volunteers

Jesse H. Jones Park & Nature Center

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Volunteers Make It Happen!