District Sees Wettest Jan.-Aug. in 88 Years

What a difference a year makes. Last year the District declared a Critical Stage Drought on September 27, 2006 for the first time since it began making drought declarations (1991). However, just a year later, all of Texas is comfortably drought-free. Over 40 inches of rain has fallen at Camp Mabry since the beginning of the year, making the year thus far the third wettest on record since Mabry began collecting data back in 1856. The area has not seen a year with more rain since 1919 when 45.9 inches fell from January to August.

see LEVELS on page 2

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Figure 1

Click on the image for an updated poster.
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As a result of the highly unusual wet weather, there has been a substantial amount of runoff and flow in the creeks that cross the aquifer and provide recharge. For example, Onion Creek, one of the largest contributors of recharge, has been flowing 95% of the time with a daily average flow of 131 cubic feet per second (maximum of 1,470 cfs) based on a flow station near Driftwood. Conversely, a year ago when the District declared Critical Stage Drought, flow at that same station was at zero flow (and was for nearly all of 2006).

Aquifer levels are reflecting the vast amount of recharge that is occurring. Barton Springs discharge has leveled off near its maximum (non-flood) discharge at about 117 cfs. In addition, the Lovelady monitor well continues to climb from a current value of 129.3 feet depth to water toward its all-time high of 106.3 ft (1992). The Lovelady well typically has a delayed response when compared to Barton Springs and will continue to climb for the next couple of months, possibly approaching an all-time high. Under these conditions, it is not likely that the aquifer could be back in drought conditions until the summer of 2008, at the earliest.

Brian Hunt, P.G. oversees the District’s Monitor Well Network.

Figure 1 (page 1): Drought Status Figure showing District’s new drought triggers: Barton Springs discharge and the Lovelady Well water levels. This chart is updated twice a month and can be obtained at: www.bseacd.org/graphics/current_drought_flyer.pdf.

District Calendar

The Board of Directors usually meets on the 2nd and 4th Thursdays of the month beginning at 6 p.m. **However, the meeting schedule is subject to change.** Please contact the District office at 512-282-8441 or the website at [www.bseacd.org](http://www.bseacd.org) for more information about upcoming meetings of the Board as well as advisory committee meetings. The agenda for posted meetings can be found on the District website. Most Board Meetings and Work Sessions are held at the District’s office at 1124 Regal Row, Austin, TX 78748.

October 11 6:00 p.m. Board Meeting
October 25 6:00 p.m. Board Meeting
November 12 Closed for Veterans’ Day
November 15 6:00 p.m. Board Meeting
November 22 and 23 Office Closed for Thanksgiving Day
December 13 6:00 p.m. Board Meeting
December 24 - 26 Office Closed for Christmas
January 1, 2008 Office Closed for New Years Day
Someone once said that there are two great tragedies in life: wanting something, and getting it. For more than a year, the District staff was consumed with drought management and enforcement activities. We rather blithely thought if only our area would receive some good rains and we would get out of drought, things would “settle down.” It did; they didn’t.

Our staff has been as busy as ever working on a variety of initiatives for our stakeholders, some of which are described elsewhere in this issue of the Aquifer Bulletin newsletter. Others reinforced in various ways the fact that external human factors are never too far away from technical matters in managing water and environmental resources. In this issue’s column, I would like to touch on several of those in the latter category -- not dwelling on the negatives but focusing more on the positives that arose from them.

Office Site Selection and the Consent Decree
The District received quite a bit of (largely, but perhaps not completely) undeserved notoriety about its consideration of a new office site, in particular one that was being offered as a donation by a developer. There were a lot of misunderstandings and misimpressions that surrounded that donation that we don’t need to go into here. But at the end of the day, the District was presented an opportunity to reinforce publicly its support for the protective provisions of the 1990 Consent Decree that we have with TxDOT, which we were more than pleased to do. Our intentions for, commitment to, and enforcement of that Consent Decree have never wavered, ever, and we would never do anything to weaken the Consent Decree as it governs large-scale development on the recharge zone. Our office site selection process goes on, but we have eliminated any site that is adjacent to the SH 45 SW rights of way, just to avoid even the appearance of suborning damage to the Consent Decree.

Protocol for Receiving Public Inputs
The District always welcomes public input into its decision-making, and we are blessed with members of the public that attend our Board meetings and partake of those opportunities. We want to encourage such participation and at the same time to ensure that such input is timely, useful, efficient, orderly, and available to all. However, our Board meetings have recently suffered from not having either an effective protocol to promote those goals, or a common perspective among the public and even Board members as to what the protocol is and/or should be. Recently, the Board established a new protocol that is designed to meet these goals and committed itself to being a deliberative body that operates according to this protocol. This protocol is similar to those used by neighboring political jurisdictions, and its provisions will be available as a handout and posted at all Board meetings. Everyone, the Board and public alike, will now have a common understanding of how the Board will receive inputs from the public. Your inputs, either generally or on specific agenda items, are encouraged.

New Legislation
During the last Legislative Session, the District was successful in getting additional statutory authorities to help manage droughts more effectively and equitably. These additional authorities have been described elsewhere, and I won’t try to summarize the changes here. But again, human factors were at the forefront of the development, pursuit, support, and passage of this legislation. The District thanks the leadership of Senator Kirk Watson and Representatives Patrick Rose and Valinda Bolton in making this happen for the District and its constituents. And two of our permittees, Texas Lehigh Cement and Centex, worked closely with us in the middle of the session to develop some compromise language that met needs of both sides; they deserve special mention and acknowledgment. And our legislative liaison, Claudia Russell of Bickerstaff, Heath, also did yeoman work in shepherd this bill through the process. From developing language to working with the committees and legislators of the House and Senate and with the Governor’s Office, this bill wouldn’t have passed and signed into law without her commitment.

see GM REPORT on page 4
Habitat Conservation Planning
The District recently concluded a three-year grant project to develop a Draft Habitat Conservation Plan and a NEPA-responsive Preliminary Draft Environmental Impact Study. The final documentation associated with this grant and this stage of the regulatory process is now on the District’s website, for either viewing or downloading, at http://www.bseacd.org/HCP_reports.html. The project’s overall goal was to develop a groundwater management plan that protected both the social and economic interests of the groundwater-user human community and the ecological interests of the groundwater-user endangered species community at Barton Springs, to the maximum extent practicable and allowed by law. We believe that goal was achieved. The District benefited tremendously from the inputs, comments, and reviews of a dedicated, multi-dimensioned Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) and a Biological Advisory Team (BAT) in the course of this project. I am sure that not every member of the CAC or BAT is satisfied with all provisions of the current plan, and it indeed will continue to be refined as it undergoes reviews by various agencies. However, I think every member would acknowledge that the District has made a good faith effort to accommodate the many diverse opinions and judgments and to arrive at a plan that ultimately will benefit the aquifer and the salamander during extreme drought. As mentioned in our joint wrap-up session of these advisory bodies, with this plan, if either of the user communities are jeopardized during an extreme drought, it will not be because of what the District has done but because of what we (or anyone else) are unable to do. But we are dedicated, and under the plan obligated, to trying to do more as the law, third parties, and our resources allow.

Kirk Holland, P.G. is the District’s General Manager.

6th Annual Austin Cave Festival
Saturday, October 27, 2007
9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
Village of Western Oaks Karst Preserve
La Cresada and Davis Lane just west of MoPac

Booths, Hands-On Activities, and Prizes. Free!
Visit www.bseacd.org for more information and directions.

· Come visit 2 caves and see how water gets to Austin-area aquifers.
· See real arrowheads and how replicas are made by flintknappers.
· Enjoy a Halloween storytime, nature performers, and a tree-climbing demonstration!
· Visit Spider Joe and some of his eight-legged friends. Find out what spiders you might find in your own backyard!
· Make seed balls out of native seeds and learn how to better care for your trees.
· Do you know your watershed? Learn about your local creeks and what steps you can to take to protect them.
· Interested in learning more about rainwater harvesting? The City of Austin will be on hand with information on water conservation and incentives.
Meet Jack Goodman, Board Vice President

Rounding out our series of "Meet the Director" articles, we visit with Jack Goodman, Director of District Precinct 4. Jack serves an area where a vast majority of its constituents use surface water provided by the City of Austin as their water supply. His constituents are very vocal and tuned into the health of Barton Springs, the "Crown Jewel of Austin". This highly urbanized and developed precinct is roughly bounded to the north by the Colorado River, south by FM 1626 and Slaughter Creek, west by Manchaca Road and MoPac Expressway, and to the east by Interstate 35 (www.bseacd.org/graphics/BSEACD_Precincts_1_4_07.pdf). The precinct is crossed by Williamson and Slaughter Creeks and the lower part of Barton Creek, whose waters form a significant part of the recharge to our aquifer; this precinct also includes Barton Springs itself.

Jack Goodman has the distinction of being the longest serving board member of the district. With 20 years of service to the Barton Springs/Edwards Aquifer Conservation District, he is our institutional memory. He's been here from the very beginning and seen the District struggle and grow. Jack's current term ends May 2008.

Staff: You are the longest serving board director and have seen the district literally from its inception to the present; through drought and wet times; through years of growing pains, upheavals, downfalls; and management challenges (including the near dissolution of the District). Yet you are still here. What keeps you coming back year after year?

Jack Goodman: Well, I got into this fight (long before the District was formed) with the movement to save Barton Springs. I've been pretty much like a lot of people in Austin, and have been dedicated to saving the springs most of my adult life. When the District got formed, my friend Karen Metchis said I needed to run for it, and I did. It was pretty horrible at first, but somebody had to be there to represent south Austin. Nothing has really changed; no one has come along that wanted to take my place, so I just stayed.

Staff: What do you see as your role as a director of the BSEACD?

JG: I represent Austin's environmental community. I don't see that anybody on the (District) board, except perhaps Craig Smith, has any real understanding of how the environmental community of south Austin really feels about Barton Springs. I feel like that if it's not me, it needs to be somebody like me who has been in the fight and that lives in south Austin. People that live on the aquifer, you know, have a perfectly legitimate role, but it's different; they have a different set of concerns. They rely on the aquifer as their sole

see TELEMETRY on page 6

District Installs New and Improved Telemetry Systems on Monitor Wells

Telemetry is a general term used to describe communications from one location to another remote location using cellular phones, radios, or satellites. In order to gauge aquifer conditions and make drought declarations, the District measures water levels in the Lovelady monitor well, which is connected to a telemetry system for near real-time data retrieval. In addition to the timely and accurate data about aquifer conditions, telemetry systems save time and money by reducing the number of field visits by staff.

In August 2006, the District installed three satellite telemetry systems that were remotely accessed via satellite. However, the satellite telemetry system was limited to periodic daily measurements, had problems with signal interference, and did not allow for two-way communication. Recent technology advancement by In-Situ, Inc. has allowed the District, at no additional cost, to upgrade its equipment to an improved communication system (Figure 2). The new system allows District staff to call the equipment from a desktop computer in the office, download data, and program the instrument as if they were physically connected to the equipment in the field.

The wells with the new telemetry include the Lovelady (our drought trigger well), the Porter, and the Hoskins wells (Figure 3). The Porter monitor well is located northwest of Buda in the middle

see GOODMAN on page 7
of the aquifer. The Hoskins well is located in the western portion of the aquifer—a relatively thin portion of the aquifer susceptible to low water levels from drought and pumping.

In the future, the District plans to have computers automatically call the equipment and download the data, which will then be displayed on the website.

Brian Hunt, P.G. oversees the District’s Monitor Well Network.

Figure 2: Location map of wells with telemetry.

Figure 3: Photograph of the new (cellular) telemetry system at the Lovelady Monitor well in South Austin. The system allows District staff to communicate from the office directly with the equipment measuring water levels in this well.
source of drinking water and therefore have a slightly different agenda; they have to think of it as something that is absolutely vital for their existence. We're on city water in south Austin. For us, it's more a function of protecting the springs.

Staff: You also serve on the board of the Save Barton Creek Association (SBCA). How are those roles different and how are they the same?

JG: Early on when there was so much rancor down at the District (back when we had a thoroughly divided board), I felt like I had a far more vital role on the SBCA board than I did on the District board because we didn't get anything done at the District level. Basically, we just fought for our existence. So, anything productive that got done in terms of protecting or fighting for the springs was done at the Association level, not the District level. I feel now that the District board is better in terms of philosophy than it used to be; I feel like now we get more done than we used to. The Save Barton Creek Association is more of an advocacy type position, and the Aquifer District is more governmental. It used to be the case that the roles were more different, but not so much any more.

Staff: What other boards do you or have you served on?

JG: I used to serve on 6 or 7 boards simultaneously. The City of Austin's Environmental Board, Save Barton Creek Association, Barton Springs/Edwards Aquifer Conservation District, the board of SANE at one time... I don't remember them all over the years. I backed off on all of that; it was too much at one time. So, Save Barton Creek Association and the Barton Springs/Edwards Aquifer Conservation District, those are the only two now.

Staff: You worked on the Colorado River Watch for years. Was that as director?

JG: Well, I was manager; I ran it by myself. The Colorado River Watch Foundation Board hired me (I'm not even sure it was a formal board at that time), and my salary was being paid by the LCRA. So in the end, I ended up working for the LCRA, basically alone, running Colorado River Watch up and down this river. That was a great experience. I guess I carried out that position for a total of about 6 yrs. It flourishes today; I still have interaction with it.

Staff: Why did you originally decide to run for a board position of Precinct 4? What was going on at that time in Austin and with the aquifer?

JG: I ran because I cared and because I had a very powerful friend named Karen Metchis, who wasn't gonna let me not do it.

Staff: Was Karen one of the originators of the District?

JG: She was part of a group of folks called the Texans for Aquifer Protection. Jim Camp, a past District board member, was part of it; Jackie, my wife, and I were part of it; the environmentalists in Austin were part of it; and Karen was part of it. Karen and I were on the Sierra Club Scope committee at the time, and that's how I got to know her - a very dynamic woman.

Staff: What factors brought about the entity now known as "the District" into existence back in 1987? (www.bseacd.org/history_of_district.html)

JG: There was as an interest in forming a conservation district for the Barton Springs Edwards Aquifer because at that time a lot of conservation districts were being formed around the state as a way to counter the existing state policy for groundwater resources, the Rule of Capture. The Rule of Capture was sacrosanct, and we needed something. Unfortunately, the districts in Texas that were formed initially basically didn't have much power. It's a little better now, and it gets better each time the legislature meets, but it's gonna take awhile longer. But, to get back to your question, there was great interest in this community to have a district formed. So, we went out and fought for it, got it passed by 80% of the people, and it was formed. The original vote was a district wide vote.

Staff: Your wife, Jackie, served the City of Austin for 12 years (and during a particularly exciting and challenging growth time here in Austin) as city council member and mayor pro-tem. Has Jackie's work and career influenced you and your activities as a board member?

JG: Of course it has. Jackie and I have been working hand in hand all our lives, not just for environmental protection, but also (most especially in Jackie's case) in lots of other areas of social responsibility. She's been a stalwart in the fight for early childhood education, affordable housing, and social justice for women and minorities. Jackie's agenda is more far-reaching that just SBCA, and her career has been a lot more dynamic than mine.
**GOODMAN Continued from page 7**

**Staff:** Now that we've chatted about the early days and how you became a board member, what do you do with the rest of your life, when you're not at board meetings?

**JG:** Well, last year I went down to Arequipa, Peru and did a water quality study for four months on the Rio Chile with my friend and student, Stephanie Herencia. That was a lot of fun and educational; I hope we did some good for those folks down there.

**Staff:** Do you have direct interaction with your constituents in Precinct 4, and is it something you encourage?

**JG:** Yes, I do. I remain on the SBCA board, and those are all my constituents. They question me on a weekly basis about what's going on.

**Staff:** Do you have any sense about the interaction the other directors have with their constituents?

**JG:** Oh, yes. I don't have nearly the direct interaction with my constituents as they do with theirs because my constituents are on city water. Remember they're more interested in what's happening with Barton Springs. When those issues come up, they might then contact me. But for the most part my constituents don't call me; they're already interested in what's going on.

**Staff:** Over the years, have you observed changes in the role the District serves in the community and with its permittees? If so, have they been positive growth changes in your opinion?

**JG:** Absolutely! Over the years (from the beginning until now), it's been positive, but in the beginning, there were board members that I didn't feel had the best interest of the aquifer or the District in mind when they voted on certain types of issues that we dealt with. Over time it has evolved and the District directors, I think, are now are much more focused on the role that we should be taking. There was a time I felt like some of the board members of the District were solely interested in destroying the District.

**Staff:** In your crystal ball view of the world, do you see groundwater districts still having a place in the future as groundwater resource managers?

**JG:** Yes, I think they are becoming more and more essential because I think it's still (I know its over 50%, I don't know what it is now) a majority of Texans that rely on groundwater, as opposed to surface water, for their daily needs. It's vitally important that you have some kind of oversight of what happens with a groundwater resource because otherwise you have things that happen like Comanche Springs (www.tsha.utexas.edu/handbook/online/articles/FF/hff2.html). It just dried up because people upstream from the springs were just sucking water out of the ground without any regard for what was happening below them. The springs just went dry and are still dry today. If a groundwater district had been around at the time, that probably wouldn't have happened.

**Staff:** I understand that Jackie Goodman is running for mayor of the City of Austin. How will that affect your availability as a board member?

**JG:** Well, I've been on the board for 20 years and sometimes I feel like I've been there too long. Maybe it's time for me to move on, and Jackie's race is going to be a difficult one, I imagine. I think it might be time for me to go. I haven't decided yet, but after 20 years, you know, ... you can't be there forever; no one can. I'll have to make that decision in the spring.

**Staff:** Jack, how do you see the role of the District as we move into the last few years of this first decade of the millennium, with no end in sight for growth and development over the aquifer area?

**JG:** I see it becoming more important because as growth continues over the resource, it's gonna become more and more important that you have some entity, some agency, that is overseeing what's going on. I don't think it's lessening; I think it's growing.

**Staff:** Is there any last thing I perhaps neglected to ask that you'd like to note to our readers?

**JG:** Well, I just think that it's vital that we stay focused on our primary job, which is the protection, conservation, and enhancement of this resource and not get sidetracked by other agendas. And I think it's also important that we remain true to our fiscal responsibility, remembering that there was a time when this District almost went under because we just didn't have the money to pay our bills.

**Staff:** Ah, you're talking about an institutional memory. We can't forget how hard we have fought and how far we've come just to get where we are now. Jack, thank you for your time and your candor.
Fall Gardening

This time last year the District area was experiencing drought restrictions that curtailed all outdoor watering. This fall the aquifer is comfortably full, and gardeners can feel excited about installing new vegetation. Fall is the perfect time in Central Texas to get out in the garden and start planting drought-resistant, native plants. Planting native Texas trees, shrubs, perennials, and wildflowers now (instead of in spring) will give them ample time to produce healthy, established root systems that can make it through next year's tough Texas summer.

Not sure on how to get started? Before any plants go in the ground, take some time to think about your design. The District's water-wise planting brochure can help you with planning a landscape that will be beautiful, efficient, and low maintenance. This step-by-step guide will help you with site analysis and design, soil analysis, plant selection, installation, plant care, and irrigation efficiency:  www.bseacd.org/graphics/waterwise_brochure.pdf

Make sure you keep these essential fall landscaping tips in mind:

Start with good soil and don't skimp!
Make sure to start with at least 6 inches of healthy soil.
For a small fee, you can have your soil tested (http://soiltesting.tamu.edu/).

Plant native plants and trees and reduce the amount of turf grass in your landscape.
Native plants thrive in our climate and soils and require very little water and maintenance if established correctly.

Water Properly.
Group plants that have similar moisture requirements and water less often and more deeply.

Mulch, Mulch, and More Mulch!
A layer of mulch protects plants by covering and shading soil, minimizing water evaporation, inhibiting weed growth, and reducing soil erosion.

Aerate turf with a plug aerator this fall to encourage deeper root growth.
Follow aeration with a 1/8 to 1/4-inch of sand and compost top dressing.

Where can I go to learn more about native and water-wise landscaping?

- The Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center (native plant info database):  www.wildflower.org
- How to plant wildflowers:  www.seedsource.com/garden/planting.htm
- Tips for planting native grasses:  www.seedsource.com/garden/grasstips.htm
Attention Austin Area Scouts:  
Explore Austin Creeks, learn about water quality, mark stormdrains in your neighborhood and earn the water drop patch.

For more information visit www.ci.austin.tx.us/watershed/wq_scouts.htm or contact Sara Heilman 974-3540.

Ecology & Management of the Water Quality Protection Lands  
Location: Parkhouse  
Sat., October 6; 9:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m. (moderate)  
Sat., December 1; 10:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. (moderate)

Ecology & Management of the Balcones Canyonlands Preserve  
Location: Cortana  
Sat., October 20; 9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. (rugged)  
Sat., December 22; 9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. (rugged)

Location: Reicher Ranch  
Sun., November 4; 2:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m. (moderate)

Location: Bull Creek Preserve  
Sat., November 17; 9:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m. (moderate)  
Sun., December 2; 2:00 p.m. - 3:30 p.m. (easy)

All About Insects (Children/Family Hike)  
Sat., November 3; 10:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m. (easy)

Conserving Migratory Species in the International Arena: Lecture with Dr. Craig Farquhar  
Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center  
4801 LaCrosse Avenue, Austin, TX 78739  
9:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.

Events for the 2007 Balcones Canyonlands Preserve Hike and Lecture Series have been very popular. Though remaining hikes in September, October and November are full, the final lecture of the series will be available to all. This series has been an exciting opportunity for the community to learn about one of the most unique urban preserve systems in the country and visit numerous sites in Travis County around Austin. Plans are underway for a second Hike & Lecture Series in 2008. Please visit www.balconescanyonlands.org for more information.

Saturday, October 13, the City of Austin will host its first Green City Festival from 10 a.m. until 4 p.m. at City Hall. Eleven City departments and 40 partnering non-profit organizations will provide a one-stop bonanza of green information wrapped in fun, music and interesting activities for the entire family. Everything you want to know about energy, water and resource efficiency will be on display. Enjoy educational talks, hands-on workshops and an interactive Kids Korner. Also, see the latest in emerging green technologies and even register for a WaterWise Honda automobile giveaway. Mark your calendar for this fun informational event!

For more information or questions, visit: www.ci.austin.tx.us/greencityfest/
UPCOMING EVENTS AT THE LADY BIRD JOHNSON WILDFLOWER CENTER

Fall Plant Sale and Gardening Festival
October 12 - 14, 2007
Fall is the perfect time to plant native plants and seeds, and this festival is the perfect way to get expert advice and a great selection for your garden. You'll find your favorite or hard-to-find native plants at this annual festival and plant sale. Guided walks and talks will be offered throughout the day, with tips on how to prepare your garden for Spring.

Goblins in the Gardens
Sunday, October 28; 4:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.
Free with Admission
Boo! Time to put on your best costume and come to the Wildflower Center's third annual Goblins in the Garden family Halloween festival! Visit the children's Little House where the little ones can explore our Mad Scientist's Laboratory and complete fun craft activities. The fun never ends as you have your family portrait taken in the Punkin' Patch, Trick or Treat around the gardens and check out the Haunted Tower. Don't forget to dress up!

Invasive Plants Public Awareness Day
Saturday, November 17; 10:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
Free with Admission
Join the Wildflower Center to hear expert presentations on invasive plants, exhibits of Central Texas invasive plant species, and meet and speak with Wildflower Center staff and citizen scientists about this growing global concern.

Nature Nights
Admission fee: $1
6:00 - 9:00 p.m.
(free for members and EcoExplorers)
Welcome to Nature Nights, a special family series designed to take advantage of our wondrous Central Texas evenings. Each program explores new topics: plants & people, monarch butterflies, owls - learning about their habits and habitats, etc. Each program will also feature a habitat hike, thematic crafts, and activities galore!

Friday, September 21 - Plants & People
Friday, October 19 - Spiders are Fascinating Creatures
Friday, November 9 - Owls on the Prowl

For more information, visit: http://www.wildflower.org/nature/

UPCOMING EVENTS AT THE AQUARENA CENTER

The Aquarena Center will be offering several activities for scouts this fall including:

Webelos Naturalist Program
Saturday, October 6; 10:00 a.m.
Pre-registration required
http://www.aquarena.txstate.edu/BoyScouts.html

Brownie Girl Scout Water Everywhere Badge Day
Saturday, November 17; 10:00 a.m.
Pre-registration required
http://www.aquarena.txstate.edu/1tours.html

Fun Days for Kids!
Pre-Registration is Required.
All events are from 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.
Grades 1 through 6. $9 per child for 3 hours of supervised educational fun! Includes crafts, games, a snack, a movie and a glass-bottom boat ride.
To make a reservation call 512-245-7540 or email sm56@txstate.edu

Saturday, September 22 - Iron Chef Kid’s Fun Day
Sunday, October 28 - Halloween Fun Day
COME IN COSTUME!
Friday, November 23 - Winter Wonders Fun Day

see EVENTS continued on page 11
FREE FALL GARDENING WORKSHOP PRESENTED BY THE TRAVIS COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS

Ready, Set, Fall!
Saturday, September 29
10:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.
Zilker Botanical Garden
2220 Barton Springs Road, Austin

The Free Seasonal Seminar Series continues with the theme "Ready, Set, Fall!" Multiple topics pertinent to fall gardening activities are covered. The Travis County Master Gardeners Association, a volunteer arm of the Texas A&M Extension Service, and the Director of Horticulture at Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center combine forces to create the fact filled, educational experience.

In spite of the heat, it is time to be in the vegetable garden. "Fall Vegetable Gardening" by Patty Leander will include the basics of vegetable gardening with the emphasis on plants and varieties that flourish in the fall and winter months.

Want a sea of bluebonnets and other wildflowers blooming next spring? Andrea DeLong-Amaya from LBJ Wildflower Center is the expert on "When and How to Plant Wildflowers." Be trained in the steps necessary to improve germination and growth of wildflowers.

"Fall Herb Gardening" by Toni Dzubay will incorporate herb care, fall planting and herb drying.

Fertilize? Water? Take-all root rot? Get your questions answered during the "Fall Lawn Care" discussion by Susan Decker. She will include all the fall basics to ensure a healthy lawn.

A Plant Clinic will be held during the entire seminar. Bring your diseased/bug eaten plant, roots and all, in a plastic bag. Gain knowledge from expert Master Gardeners on action you can take to remedy the situation.

Seminar is free. No reservations taken. Austin City Parks Department charges a $3.00 parking fee. For more information call 512-854-9600 and ask for the Master Gardeners desk.

http://www.tcmastergardener.org/html/events.html

FREE RAINWATER HARVESTING SEMINAR PRESENTED BY THE TRAVIS COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS

Saturday, September 22
10:00 a.m. - 11:30 p.m.
West Rural Community Center
8656 Hwy. 71 W., Building A
(west of the "Y" in Oak Hill)
Austin

Rainwater Harvesting is the topic of this free seminar. The water that lands on your property is yours if you learn how to capture it. Don't let the water run away; retain it for your own use!

Gain the knowledge necessary to build a rainwater harvesting system. All the basics are covered by Bud Kane and Jackie Johnson, Master Gardeners, who have helped design and build a number of collection systems.

This free seminar is presented by the Travis Country Master Gardeners Association, a volunteer arm of the Texas A&M Extension Service. The seminar is free, and no reservations will be taken. For more information, call 512-854-9600 and ask for the Master Gardeners desk.
http://www.tcmastergardener.org/html/events.html

SAVE BARTON CREEK ASSOCIATION 37TH ANNUAL CONSERVATION AWARDS CELEBRATION

Monday, November 19th (6:00 p.m. - 10:00 p.m.)
Zilker Clubhouse
Snacks and Refreshments
Open to the Public (Bring Friends & Families!)
Contributions Welcome
PO Box 163125 Austin, Texas 78763
www.savebartoncreek.org
sbca@austin.rr.com
Twelve organizations hosted the second annual Groundwater to the Gulf: Summer Institute for Central Texas Educators on June 20th through 22nd. The three-day, field-trip based program was hosted by local water experts and provided 50 local educators with hands-on learning opportunities that emphasized techniques for teaching water-based curricula to students in grades 4 through 8. Participants followed the path of water in Central Texas from its origins to its final destination in the Gulf of Mexico. Activities centered around hydrogeology, groundwater, urban watersheds/ecosystems, water quality, water protection, and water conservation and included field trips to McKinney Falls State Park, the Barton Springs Splash! Exhibit, Aquarena Center, and the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center. In addition to the hands-on instruction, educators (who came from all around the State including Central Texas, San Saba, Dallas and Houston) received free water-based curricula, learning tools, and resources for their classrooms, as well as continuing education credits.

Last year’s teachers were met with sweltering heat, but this year's attendants enjoyed mild temperatures and plenty of rain. The teachers really enjoyed the conference, and according to the questions posed in the pre/post testing, their knowledge about water and water issues increased by 27%. The teachers praised the conference, saying, "The information was aligned with science TEKS, can be used across curricula, and were perfectly designed to being adapted to all learners", and "This institute helped me make valuable connections. Now, I feel confident that I can help my students see those connections, especially locally". The teachers went on to rave about the materials they received for their classrooms, the quality of the instruction, and how the conference was, "Far better planned and organized than 99% of the inservices/institutes I have attended. I will brag about this to everyone". One teacher summed up the conference remarking, "This institute really restored the honor to the (core providers and education) profession of being a teacher. Thanks for making me feel as though I am held in high regard by my community".

The Groundwater to the Gulf planning team would like to thank its sponsors for helping: HEB, Texas French Bread, Starbucks Coffee, Taco Cabana, City of Austin Watershed Protection and Development Review Department, Save Barton Creek Association, McLean and Howard, L.L.P., Drenner and Golden, L.L.P., LCRA, and Stratus Properties. Their generous contributions allowed us to offer the opportunity at no cost to the educators.

The Institute is hosted by: Barton Springs/Edwards Aquifer Conservation District, Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, Lower Colorado River Authority, City of Austin Watershed Protection Development Review, Keep Austin Beautiful, Splash! Sheffield Education Center, Texas Cave Management Association, Bureau of Economic Geology, Hill Country Foundation, City of Sunset Valley, and the River Systems Institute at Texas State University.

Any educator interested in getting on the mailing list for next year's conference can contact Jennee Galland at the Barton Springs/Edwards Aquifer Conservation District at 512-282-8441.
Household Hazardous Waste Collections for Residents of Hays County

Protect your home and the environment by properly disposing of toxic chemicals you no longer need at one of these collections.

When?
Saturday,
December 1, 2007
March 8, 2008
8 a.m. to noon

Where?
City of San Marcos
City Hall
630 E. Hopkins
San Marcos, TX

Cost:
Event free to all residents of Hays County and the City of San Marcos. Must provide proof of residency.

Safety Tips:
· Transport chemicals in trunk of car
· Keep products in original containers
· If broken or leaking, place in container of like material
· Do not combine chemicals

We will accept:
Cleaning Products: Drain cleaners, concentrates, degreasers, oven cleaners, solvents, polishers, pool chemicals, household batteries, etc.

Paint Products: Latex & oil-based paints, spray paints, thinners, strippers, preservatives, brush cleaners, etc.

Gardening Products: Pesticides, sprays/dusts, weed killers, rat poisons, insecticides, etc.

Automotive Products: Antifreeze, batteries, motor oil & oil filters, brake fluids, transmission fluid, etc.

We will not accept:
Tires, containers larger than 5 gallons, medical wastes, empty containers, compressed gas cylinders or wastes generated by businesses.

Rain or Shine!

This is a drive-through event. You will not need to exit your car. Contact the City of San Marcos at 512-393-8036 with any questions.
Submit Your Nomination for the 2007 Groundwater Stewardship Awards

The Barton Springs/Edwards Aquifer Conservation District presents these stewardship awards each year to deserving individuals, organizations, companies or agencies that have invested exemplary effort towards the protection and conservation of water resources in the Barton Springs segment of the Edwards Aquifer. The District will accept nominations in these categories:

**Water Conservation** - Honors efforts to use water wisely. Three separate awards will be given in this category:
- Water Conservation by an End-User in the District
- Water Conservation by a Water Supplier in the District
- Water Conservation by a Builder/Developer in the District

**Education** - Honors efforts to educate individuals, neighborhoods, school groups, professional contacts, or an entire community about water-related issues.

**Research** - Honors efforts that lead to improved understanding of or advanced practices in areas such as groundwater, hydrogeology, water treatment, alternative water supplies, well drilling, or structural and non-structural best management practices to reduce non-point source pollution.

**Water Quality Protection** - Honors efforts that focus on water quality issues such as water monitoring, sampling and testing, pollution prevention (such as creek cleanups), and land use practices to reduce non-point source pollution.

**Innovation** - Honors efforts that incorporate new and creative practices or represent outstanding efforts in communication and partnership toward the betterment of the aquifer and related environmental issues.

**Permittee of the Year** - Honors a District permittee who is an exemplary steward of the Barton Springs segment of the Edwards Aquifer. The permittee of the year will have demonstrated a continued commitment to education, water quality protection, and water conservation. The District will nominate and choose the winner of this award.

An individual, group, company or agency may be nominated in any one category, and anyone can nominate a deserving entity. The District's Board of Directors will select the recipients; awards may not be given every year in every category, and categories may be added if needed.

Fully completed nominations must be received in the District office by Friday, September 28, 2007 by 5 p.m. Nomination forms are available on the District's website at: www.bseacd.org or by contacting the BSEACD office at 512-282-8441.

Send nominations to:
BSEACD, Attn: Awards
1124 Regal Row, Austin, 78748
or fax to 512-282-7016.

The Bowie High School Culinary Arts program will host this year’s awards ceremony in November 2007.