

Environmental Exchange

A publication of the Citizens' Environmental Coalition

November 2002
Newsletter &
Calendar

The Houston-Galveston area's most comprehensive listing of environmental activities and events.

Pipeline fuels controversy Environmentalists lose Longhorn battle

by Erika McDonald

After battling environmentalists for years, the Longhorn Partners are now free to resurrect a 50-year-old pipeline to transport refined fuels including gasoline, diesel and aviation fuel 700 miles from Houston to El Paso. After postponing an October 1 start-up date, Longhorn officials are unsure when the line will begin pumping.

Leading the fight against Longhorn is the Save Barton Creek Association in Austin. Activists there are certain that the age and integrity of the line pose a serious threat to human health, wildlife and the environment.

Some portions of the line, specifically the segments buried under Houston, were built as early as 1947.

In Austin the pipeline crosses the Colorado River, the city's main source of drinking water, and a section of the sensitive Edward's Aquifer that feeds Barton Springs.

In Houston, the pipeline runs through populous communities, in some places fewer than 25 feet from schools and playgrounds and directly under homes. The Houston neighborhoods most affected by

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The 50-year old Longhorn pipeline will pump gasoline under these neighborhoods along I-45. Find out if the pipeline runs through your neighborhood by logging onto <http://66.69.195.140/epa.gov/longvol3.htm>. The EPA provides extensive maps and mitigation plans.

Think globalization? Act locally.

by Erika McDonald

When 12,000 demonstrators converged on Washington D.C. in September to protest meetings of the International Monetary Fund and World Bank, Houston activist Scott Parkin was among them. Part of the anti-globalization movement for the last two years, Parkin is familiar with the frequent assertion by mainstream media that the movement is dead. Parkin called this imposed moratorium ridiculous. Not only is the movement alive and well, it has beating a heart right here in Houston.

"The movement has shifted into the next wave, which is bringing that experience (of national and world-wide direct actions) back to the community to agitate people to work at the local level," he said.



Thousands of anti-globalization protestors marched on Washington D.C. in September. Photo courtesy Alliance for Global Justice.

For Nan Hildreth, Houston Sierra Club's co-chair on population and sustainability, the "next wave" of anti-globalization means working with local environmental groups to frame the issue in a positive light. She said anti-globalization activists are trying to make the movement more inclusive

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Environmental Exchange

The Environmental Exchange is published by the Citizens' Environmental Coalition (CEC), an information clearinghouse and communications network for environmental issues in the Houston/Galveston area.

The CEC mission is to improve the quality of life and health in the region through education, dialogue and collaboration.

CEC serves the general public by bringing many diverse groups together to build awareness and stimulate discussion about environmental issues in the region.

Programs include forums that give a balanced perspective on environmental issues, and information vehicles that enhance understanding.

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Perspectives Confined Animal Feeding Operations

by Jean Hagerbaumer, PhD

Confined Animal Feeding Operations, also called factory farms impose heavy environmental costs. The poultry industry pioneered the use of CAFOs more than 50 years ago. More recently, the hog industry started down the same path. Now, cattle ranches and dairies are becoming "chickenized."

Phosphorus and nitrogen are the most concentrated nutrients in manure. Poultry manure is especially high in phosphorous. High phosphorous content in water promotes algae blooms. When the algae die, their decomposition extracts oxygen from the water, which suffocates aquatic animal life. Poultry producers argue that using dry chicken waste as fertilizer poses no threat to surface water because phosphorous adheres to soil particles and is eventually utilized in plant growth. However, soil can become saturated with phosphorous leading to runoff; and soil particles, with the phosphorous still attached, then erode. Egg, hog and dairy operations mix wastes with water and store it in lagoons. Every lagoon studied has been found to leak.

Plant growth is seasonal while CAFOs are stocked year-round. Without plant growth, fertilizer is not needed so it begins to accumulate. It takes 225 acres in hay production to use the phosphorous in waste produced by 20,000 chickens. The average modern broiler house contains 27,500+ birds each.

There are one million hogs in the Texas panhandle with the prospect of an additional million in the near future. It takes 3,194

acres of irrigated cropland to handle the nitrogen in the manure produced by 3,700 sows. It takes 7,454 acres to handle the phosphorous.

As wastes are broken down, numerous harmful gases are produced. The major ones are ammonia, hydrogen sulfide and methane. What goes up must come down – somewhere. Studies have found that soil and water downwind from CAFOs and waste disposal sites may become acidified. In close proximity to broiler houses, nitrogen deposits are too high for healthy trees to thrive. Plant diversity decreases as nitrogen-tolerant plants take over.

Also excreted in the wastes of both species are naturally produced hormones, pathogens and heavy metals like arsenic and selenium. Because CAFOs are such a flawed method of animal production, their mortality rates are tremendously high — a fact that corporations go to great lengths to hide. Carcass disposal compounds the environmental problems.

Not only do CAFOs pollute the environment, they also squander resources. The aforementioned 3700-sow facility needs 254 million gallons of water/year for animal consumption and waste disposal. Energy consumption is extraordinary because CAFOs are climate-controlled. Baby animals require a lot of warmth in cool weather, but toxic gases must be vented. Heat leaves the barn with the gases which increases the need for more heat. In the summer, numerous large fans are used to handle heat, humidity and gases. Growers report electricity or propane bills that can run into thousands of dollars each month.

In addition to harming the environment, CAFOs are a way to doing business. Studies show that economies of scale peak around 150 sows or 200-300 dairy cows, not the thousands of animals actually found. I have yet to find even one study showing that CAFOs are more efficient than traditional, smaller, diversified farms.

CAFOs claim they create jobs. For each new job created, they displace more than three existing ones because they do not buy locally, and are highly mechanized in order to minimize labor costs. CAFOs also claim to expand the tax base. What good is an expanded tax base if the taxes are forgiven? These companies will not move into an area without major tax abatements. Then



Photo courtesy The Sierra Club.

they operate under both agricultural and corporate exemptions. On top of that, every aspect of their operation is heavily subsidized.

When the corporation (or grower) decides to abandon a farm, taxpayers will spend around \$42,000/lagoon surface acre in cleanup costs.

Make no mistake about it, I am a farm girl from the Midwest and very pro-agriculture. What I oppose is the pseudo-agriculture being perpetrated by corporations.

For more information on CAFOs, email ziggyfred@hotmail.com

Pipeline

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the pipeline are predominantly black or Hispanic and low income.

When the pipeline was originally used to transport crude oil from West Texas, it flowed downhill into Houston. For the refined fuels to be piped from Houston, they must be pumped in a pressurized line. Longhorn opponents argue that greater stress will be placed on the pipeline when pumping fuels in the opposite direction than originally intended. They are also concerned that gasoline, which is lighter and thinner than oil, will be harder to contain once leaked.

The condition of the line is another source of heated debate. Don Deaver, of Houston, is a former Exxon pipeline engineer of 33 years who now works as a consultant on national pipeline safety boards. Before Longhorn bought the pipeline in 1995, it was owned by Exxon, which inspected the line that year. According to Deaver, the inspection revealed about 4,500 pipe joints (more than 10 percent of the total number of pipe joints on the line) with at least one area of missing metal that had been completely corroded. Some areas of corrosion were as long as 10-15 feet. Of the 4,500 corroded joints, fewer than 200 were unearthed and repaired. He said that because the pipe has gotten older since 1995 there is no doubt that even more corrosion has occurred.

An Environmental Protection Agency assessment completed in 2000 yielded a finding of no significant impact. The EPA concluded that the odds of a spill of 5,000 barrels or more occurring were one in 16,200 per year. They determined that even such a "worst case scenario" would likely have insignificant

environmental consequences.

The decision was bitterly disputed by environmentalists who had filed suit against Longhorn, the EPA and the Department of Transportation. Deaver called the EPA findings "fictitious," claiming that the assessment yielded flawed estimates of probability based on data from individual areas of the pipeline rather than considering the age and condition of the entire line.

The EPA noted that from 1950 to 1995, the pipeline logged 60 spills of 50 barrels or more. The overall spill frequency was greater than the national average for hazardous liquid pipeline operators.

In fact, a portion of the pipeline in east Houston exploded while it was being tested in 1998, causing the evacuation of more than 100 homes. No injuries were reported.

Another problem with the assessment was that it was paid for by Longhorn. The contractors who completed the analysis were not hired by the EPA or DOT but by Longhorn, which Deaver said allowed the company to control the scope of the assessment. He suggested that because the federal agencies and Longhorn were defendants in the same lawsuit, the regulatory role of the agencies was compromised.

"The agencies and the industry aren't supposed to be on the same team," Deaver said. "Usually one side wears white shirts and the other side wears black shirts-this time they were both wearing grey."

The city of Austin and the Barton Springs Edwards Aquifer Conservation District sought a court order to stop the pipeline until the completion of an environmental impact statement, which they said would require a more extensive examination than the assessment. In July, District Judge Sam Sparks ruled against plaintiffs, saying he did not have the legal authority to stop the line or force an EIS. His decision cleared the way for Longhorn to begin pumping.

In a 40-page ruling, Sparks expressed his reluctance at allowing the pipeline operators to continue with their plans saying that, had he been granted more discretion, he would have ordered Longhorn to replace the aging line.

"Time will only tell if the mitigation measures will be sufficient to contain the dangers inherent in this decrepit line," he wrote, "and the people and critters in its threatening shadow can only hope and pray that they will."

Danger Underfoot

Don Deaver, a retired pipeline engineer and opponent of the Longhorn pipeline says in Houston, more than anywhere else, there should be acute public interest in pipeline safety.

There are more pipelines buried under Houston than any other city in the country. Nearly one fifth of the nation's oil refining takes place within 100 miles of downtown Houston. A similar percentage of U.S. chemical manufacturing takes place in Harris, Brazoria and Galveston Counties. Though most lines are located in eastern Harris County, no area in the county is pipefree.



Photo courtesy Pipeline Action.

Crude oil pipelines run just feet below Post Oak near the Galleria and through the middle of neighborhoods like Westbury in densely populated southwest Houston.

Natural gas from the Gulf of Mexico travels through Houston on its way to northern states. Liquefied hazardous gases are piped from one chemical plant to another. At least 10 natural gas lines cross beneath U.S. 290 and through neighborhoods in northwest Harris County.

Most of the opposition to the Longhorn pipeline has come from Austin where official estimates put about 9,000 people living within 1,250 feet of the pipeline. Nearly five times as many people live that close to the pipeline in Houston, yet residents here have not taken part in the Longhorn battle.

Deaver said he was the only Houstonian in attendance at a 2000 public hearing on the pipeline, the only one held in Houston. He said public hearings in Austin and other areas inspired much higher attendance.

To become involved or to find out the latest news visit www.pipelineaction.org.
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Act Locally.

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by focusing on sustainability.

According to Hildreth, globalization threatens sustainable development. "In attempting to standardize products for global trade, global structures bring environmental protection laws down to the lowest common denominator, often overturning them completely." She said that the processes used to set up global trade agreements typically exclude the input of environmental groups.

Hildreth heads up Globalization Forum, a local group that takes a scholarly approach to globalization. Members meet monthly to study proposed laws and business innovations to determine whether they "contribute to or diminish global justice." Currently, Globalization Forum's book-study group is discussing *Globalization and Its Discontents* by Joseph Stiglitz.

Parkin organizes locally with the Houston Global Awareness Collective, a group largely comprised of students from Rice University, the University of Houston and the University of St. Thomas. Since the group's commencement in July of 2001, HGAC has organized dozens of protests, teach-ins and demonstrations.

Among their activities in the past year, HGAC held a demonstration in front of the Enron building downtown and marched from the River Oaks Country Club to former executive Jeff Skilling's home. Teach-ins, organized in part by HGAC, drew activists from all over the world to the Exxon Mobile shareholders meeting in Dallas to learn about the Texas-based multinational's environmental abuses in the developing world and the U.S. In September, demonstrators stood at the corner of Shepherd and West Grey, where one Starbucks shop faces another, to distribute fliers detailing the coffee chain's use of recombinant Bovine Growth Hormone. Most recently, HGAC hosted a lecture in October featuring famed historian Noam Chomsky who examined the environmental and social ramifications of corporate globalization.

Parkin admits that the anti-globalization movement might not be for everyone, but insists that the environmental implications warrant serious attention.

"We don't expect everyone to be out in the streets," he said, "but everyone should be aware of what corporate globalization does to the environment."

Synergized

More than 100 people came out on October 1 for CEC's 2002 Synergy Awards for Environmental Excellence. Fox 26 News reporter Ned Hibberd emceed the awards ceremony and the South American sounds of Sur enlivened the festivities.


CEC would like to thank our sponsors, Marathon Oil Corporation for their generous support. Table sponsors included H-E-B, Green Mountain Energy, Houston Audubon Society, Gayle and Mike DeGuerin and Carter & Burgess.



Representatives from H-E-B, winner of the Synergy Award for Corporate Awareness, enjoy the ceremony. Photo by Sarah Doss

According to a report by Friends of the Earth, an international network of grassroots environmental groups, global policies have wreaked havoc on the environment of many developing countries. The report's authors said that Structural Adjustment Programs, which represent half of IMF investment, promote development that is not environmentally sustainable. SAP conditions emphasize export-led development, which leads to the exploitation of valuable natural resources. Cutting social spending and reducing the size of local governments, also conditions of SAPs, means less capacity to enforce environmental regulations. IMF policies also encourage the deregulation of foreign-owned business. In other words, countries are forced to compete for foreign investment by offering low wages, tax breaks and relaxed environmental regulations.

World Bank-funded projects like dams, power plants, oil pipelines and medical waste incinerators often result in environmental devastation and social dislocation. An internal World Bank study found that fewer than 20 percent of World Bank adjustment loans included any environmental assessment.

For more information on HGAC, email to hgac2001@yahoo.com. Visit Globalization Forum on the web at www.cistix.com/Glob-alization.html. 

CEC Notes

Grant writing workshop

The first-ever CEC grant writing workshop was held on October 8. The event kicked off what we hope will become a series of quarterly workshops. CEC member organizations will have the opportunity to learn valuable skills that will help them raise funds to continue their important work. Experienced grant writers are also encouraged to attend and share their expertise with others. The CEC would like to thank Anne Olson, President of the Buffalo Bayou Partnership for help in making the first workshop a success. If you have any ideas to contribute to this ongoing discussion or would like more information on upcoming workshops contact Sarah Doss at 713.524.4232 or email to sarah@cechouston.org.

Coalition Notes

Buffalo Bayou and Beyond

The Buffalo Bayou Partnership announced in September a 20-year plan to turn the bayou into a pedestrian-oriented waterfront district. The City of Houston, Harris County and the Harris County Flood

Control District co-sponsored the initiative. The plan's theme is balancing conservation with development, creating 850 acres of new park land, building a network of trails to promote access and reclaiming former industrial sites to restore damaged environmental resources.

Another major component of the plan is flood management in downtown. Two new canals will be built to add supplementary floodwater capacity to the bayou. The increase could reduce flooding in north downtown by 5.5 feet. To highlight the canals, a park and promenade would extend the waterfront into downtown along Commerce Street providing access to the bayou. Widening the bayou at specific points will also increase capacity for floodwater conveyance.

The plan will also focus on affordable housing in its redevelopment of the East End neighborhood. Other initiatives in the neighborhood include expansion of trails and parks, turning the north-side sewage treatment facility into a botanical garden and improving public transportation along Clinton Drive and Navigation Boulevard. In the West End, the plan provides for the creation of ponds and wetlands, increasing wildlife habitat and realigning Allen Parkway to add green space and parking.

The recommendations included in the master plan were the culmination of an 18-month private study. Funding for the study came from the City of Houston, Harris

County, Harris County Flood Control District and private funds raised by the Buffalo Bayou Partnership.

EcoNotes

Ozone healing?

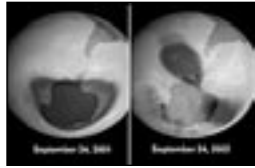


Photo courtesy NASA.

The hole in the ozone layer split in two and shrunk to its smallest size since 1988. In September, satellite photos showed the hole measuring six million miles, compared to an average of nine million miles over the last six years. Scientists from NASA and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration attributed the improvement to unusually high temperatures around the polar vortex, a circular wind pattern that forms annually in the stratosphere over Antarctica. Windy stratospheric conditions over the southern hemisphere caused the hole to split in two. Although the ozone has not begun to repair itself, scientists predicted that healing could begin in five years and that the hole could close in 50 years.

Federal funds for Texas wildlife

Texas Parks and Wildlife Department is slated to receive millions in new federal dollars in 2003 earmarked for community conservation grants, urban wildlife programs, non-game research, marine monitoring, border conservation and two new partnerships to conserve migratory bird habitats.

This year, the House passed a bill from the U.S. Department of the Interior that would provide almost twice as much state wildlife grant funding as last year, in addition to federal Land and Water Conservation Fund money for park projects. The Senate approved a similar measure and the two bills are awaiting resolution in conference committee. Depending on the outcome, the TPWD could receive another \$3-5 million in federal funds next year.

Land use major cause of climate change

A NASA study revealed that climate

change, thought to be caused primarily by the emission of greenhouse gasses, may actually be attributed in large part to human caused land-use changes. Land-surface changes like urban sprawl, deforestation, reforestation and agricultural and irrigation practices have a significant impact on surface regional temperatures, precipitation and large-scale atmospheric circulation. The study argues these changes to land surface in North America, Europe and southeast Asia redistribute heat regionally and globally within the atmosphere and may actually have a greater impact on climate change than heat trapping gasses like carbon dioxide. Through land-cover changes over the last 300 years, humans may have already altered the climate more than the effects that would occur by doubling carbon dioxide emissions, according to the report. If carbon dioxide (CO2) emissions continue at current rates, atmospheric CO2 concentrations are expected to double by 2050. Land surface changes will also continue to occur.

President's Letter

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community through a park or a library?

Do I, as a shareholder of a Fortune 500 company, really want to know that the CEO is taking more than a hundred million dollars a year for his personal use? How does one actually spend a hundred million dollars a year?

November Calendar

For the most complete current listing of environmental happenings in the Houston-Galveston region, visit CEC's website at www.cechouston.org and click on Calendar.

Sat, Nov 2

Project WILD Educator Workshop

Where: Armand Bayou Nature Center

When: 9 am-4 pm

Contact: 281-474-2551

Fee: \$15; Pre-registration required

Garden Workshop: Bulbs for Spring

Where: Mercer Arboretum

When: 8 am-12 noon

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Resource Corner

Helpful hints for CEC member organizations

How big is your footprint?

So you recycle, take the bus to work and never eat meat. But just what sort of a mark will you leave on the planet? Find out by calculating your own ecological footprint. Your ecological footprint is the amount of land it takes to support your way of life. Best Foot Forward, a UK-based sustainability group provides an eco-footprint calculator on their web site in addition to other resources. Though not exactly scientific, the calculator will give you an idea of how heavily you tread on the Earth based on your answers to a few easy questions. Visit www.bestfootforward.com/footprintlife.htm. You may be in for a shock.

November Calendar

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Contact: 281-443-8731
Fee: Free

Mystery of the Night Forest - A Family Nature Adventure

Where: Houston Arboretum & Nature Center
When: 6-9 pm
Contact: 713-681-8433
Fee: Free

Rice Design Alliance Gala

Where: Reliant Stadium
When: 7:00 pm
Contact: 713-348-4876
Fee: \$250

Mon, Nov 4

Ornithology Group Meeting – Shorebird Identification

David Dauphin, Speaker
Where: Bayland Community Center, 6400 Bissonnet
When: 7:00 pm
Contact: Skip Almoney at 713-524-4285
Fee: Free

Tue, Nov 5

Naturalist Certification Program – Interpreting Nature

Where: Houston Arboretum & Nature Center
When: 7-9 pm
Contact: 713-681-8433
Fee: \$15 for member, \$20 for non-member

Wed, Nov 6

Invertebrates as Pets, How and Why?

Where: Nature Discovery Center
When: 7:00 pm
Contact: 713-667-6550
Fee: Free

Time-tested Landscapes

Water smart gardening; heirloom plants.
Where: Armand Bayou Nature Center
When: 7-9 pm
Contact: 713-743-1060
Fee: \$20 for members, \$24 for non-members

Thu, Nov 7

Identifying Wintering Songbirds

Call for other birding classes in November and December.
Where: Armand Bayou Nature Center
When: 7-9 pm
Contact: 713-743-1060
Fee: \$20 for members, \$24 for non-members

Fri, Nov 8

Natural History Field Trip – Owl Prowl

Bill Golob, Leader. Look for all 4 species of local owls.
Where: Houston Arboretum & Nature Center
When: 6 pm- 12 midnight
Contact: 713-681-8433
Fee: \$30; Pre-registration required

Sat, Nov 9

Destination Space Station Educator Workshop

Where: Moody Gardens, 1 Hope Blvd., Galveston, TX
When: 9 am-4 pm
Contact: 1-800-582-4673, ext. 4231
Fee: \$35 (lunch included)

Mercer Garden Tour

Where: Mercer Arboretum
When: 9-11 am
Contact: 281-443-8731
Fee: Free

Urban Harvest – Annual Harvest Celebration

Where: Braes Interfaith Ministries, 4300 W. Bellfort
When: Please call for time
Contact: 713-880-5540
Fee: Free

Introduction to Birding

Dr. Dan Brooks, HMNS, Leader
Where: Hermann Park
When: Please call
Contact: 713-639-4724
Fee: \$10 for member, \$12 for non-member; Pre-registration required.

Sat, Nov 9 & Sun, Nov 10

Fall Festival

Pet farm animals, see a horse competition, paddle a canoe, buy handcrafted items, enjoy home-baked goodies and ice cream, & more.
Where: Armand Bayou Nature Center, 8500 Bay Area Boulevard
When: Sat – 9-5, Sun – 12-5
Contact: 281-474-2551
Fee: Members: \$4 adults, \$2 children
Non-members: \$5 adults, \$3 children
Free for ages 4 & under
On-site parking: \$2, Shuttle from UHCL: free

Sun, Nov 10

Natural Selections: Unique Greenspaces of Buffalo Bayou

When: 2-5 pm
Contact: 713-752-0314
Fee: \$20

Mon, Nov 11

How to Start a Community Garden

Where: Urban Harvest, 1900 Kane
When: 4-6:30 pm
Contact: 713-880-5540
Fee: Free; Pre-registration required

Tue, Nov 12

Hands On Gardening Class 5 – Ecological Pest Management

Where: Urban Harvest, 1900 Kane
When: 6:15-8:15 pm
Contact: 713-880-5540
Fee: \$10 for member, \$20 for non-member

Naturalist Certification Program – Basic Ornithology

Where: Houston Arboretum & Nature Center
When: 7-9 pm
Contact: 713-681-8433
Fee: \$15 for member, \$20 for non-member

Wed, Nov 13

Lunch Bunch: Alternatives to Pest Control

Where: Mercer Arboretum
When: 12 noon-1 pm
Contact: 281-443-8731
Fee: Free

White Oak Bayou Association Annual Meeting

Where: Heights Firehouse, 12th and Yale
When: 7:00 pm
Contact: Fred Lazare at 713-880-9376
Fee: Free

Mass Extinction – Why We Should Care and What We Can Do

Dr. Norman Myers, Speaker
Where: Houston Zoo, Brown Education Center
When: 7:00 pm
Contact: 713-874-5102
Fee: \$10 for member, \$15 for non-member

Fri, Nov 15

East Texas Herpetological Society Meeting

Where: Houston Zoo, Brown Education Center
When: 7:30 pm
Contact: 409-927-2736 or www.eths.org
Fee: Free

Sat, Nov 16

Canoe Double Bayou

Paddling Time: 3-4 hours. Reservations required. Rent canoe for additional fee.
Contact: 281-332-3381
Fee: \$12.50

Buffalo Bayou Canoe Tour

When: 1-5:30 pm
Contact: 713-752-0314
Fee: \$40

Winter Annuals: Plant Now for a Beautiful

Spring

Where: Mercer Arboretum

When: 9-11 am

Contact: 281-443-8731

Fee: Free

Camille's Inside Look at the Salad Season – A Hands On Workshop

Where: Inner City Market Garden,
call for location

When: 10:30 am-12 noon

Contact: 713-880-5540

Fee: \$10 for member, \$20 for non-member

Ornithology Group Field Trip – Bolivar Flats

Where: Please call for location

When: Please call for time

Contact: Glenn Olsen at 281-345-4151

Fee: Free

Mon, Nov 18

How to Start a Community Garden

Where: Urban Harvest, 1900 Kane

When: 1-4 pm

Contact: 713-880-5540

Fee: Free; Pre-registration required

Naturalist Explorers Class – Ancient Greeks, Simple Machines, and the Natural World (ages 5-12)

Where: Houston Arboretum & Nature Center

When: 9 am-12 noon

Contact: 713-681-8433

Fee: \$9 for members, \$12 for non-members;
Pre-registration required

Sat, Nov 23

Chrysanthemum Show

Where: Mercer Arboretum

When: 10 am-5 pm

Contact: 281-443-8731

Fee: Free

Sun, Nov 24

Basket Weaving

For ages 7+. Learn Native American basket weaving and make a basket to decorate the Thanksgiving table. Reservations required.

Where: Jesse H. Jones Park

When: 2:00 pm

Contact: 281-446-8588

Fee: Free; Reservations required


Fri, Nov 29

Holiday Market

Where: Houston Arboretum & Nature Center

When: 10 am-4 pm

Contact: 713-681-8433

Fee: Free 

Regular Meetings

Meetings are monthly unless otherwise indicated.

Call to verify before attending a meeting. To list meetings, call 713-524-4CEC or fax 713-524-3311.

American Institute of Architects Environmental Committee 2nd Tues at noon. AIA office 3000 Richmond, Ste 500. 713-520-0155.

American Institute of Chemical Engineers 1st Thurs, Sheraton Astrodome, 610 Loop S. & Kirby Matthew Kolodney, 713-767-3752.

American Planning Assoc. 1st Tues, 11:45 am, The Court at St. James Place. Bret Keast 713-785-0080.

Bayou Preservation Assoc. 2nd Monday of Jan, March, May, Sept & Nov, 12 noon, Houston Center for the Arts, 713-529-6443.

BikeHouston last Tues, 6:30 pm, 3015 Richmond 713-652-2555.

Citizens' Environmental Coalition Board meeting 1st Tues, 6 pm, Houston Environmental Center, 3015 Richmond. 713-524-4CEC.

Electric Auto Association, Houston Chapter. 3rd Thurs, 6:30 pm, HEC 3015 Richmond, Suite 280. Ben Chamberlin, 713-975-7744.

Environmental Educator's Exchange 1st Wed of Feb, May, Aug, Nov, 5 pm. Sites vary. Kelly Drinnen, 409-683-4233.

Friends of Texas Wildlife, 2nd Sat, 10 am, Samual Matthew Park, 1728 E. Hufsmith Road, Tomball, 281-255-8885 or Lynda Guertin, cell 713-825-4095.

Galveston Bay Estuary Program Quarterly. Call for specific dates: 281-332-9937.

Galveston-Houston Assoc. For Smog Prevention (GHASP) 3rd Thurs, 7:30 pm, 3126 Fairhope. Ron Parry, 713-669-1195.

Greater Houston Preservation Alliance, Monthly walking tours, 4th Sun, 2 pm. Historic Neighborhoods Council Meeting, 4th Sat, 10:30 am, Heights Branch Library. 713-216-5000 or www.gpha.org.

Green Party 3rd Mon, Montrose Public Library 4100 Montrose. 713-866-6285 or 713-880-3219.

Gulf Coast Institute: Houston/Gulf Coast Smart Growth Initiative 4th Wed, monthly at 11:30 am, H-GAC, 3555 Timmons, 2nd floor. 713-523-5757.

Harris County Soil & Water Conservation District 1st Wed, 9 am. Bennie Billington, 713-855-8716.

HART – the Houston Animal Rights Team 1st and 3rd Thurs, 7pm, University of St. Thomas 2nd floor, Crooker Center (the student cafeteria) 713-527-9144 .

Historic Neighborhoods Council 1st Sun, 10:30 am, Heights Branch Library. Ramona Davis 713-216-5000.

Houston Arboretum & Nature Center 3rd Wed, 5:45 pm, Houston Arboretum. 713-681-8433.

Houston Archeological Society 2nd Fri, 7:30 pm, M.D. Anderson Hall, Univ. of St. Thomas. Tommy Nuckols, 713-664-8369.

Houston Audubon Society 2nd Wed, Sept-May. 7 pm, Brown Education Center, Houston Zoo. 713-932-1639.

Houston Bicycle Club, Inc 2nd Tues, except May. 7 pm, Tracy Gee Community Center, 3599 Westcenter Drive. 713-935-2810.

Houston Canoe Club Gen Mtg 2nd Wed, 7 pm, Red Cross Building, 2700 Southwest Frwy. Social Mtg 4th Wed, 7 pm Jax Grill, 1613 Shepherd. 713-467-8857.

Houston Homeowners Assoc 4th Mon (except November, Aug, and Dec), 5:30 pm, First Presbyterian, 5300 S. Main. Michael O'Brian, 281-496-0752.

Houston Renewable Energy Group Last Sunday of Jan, April, July, Oct., 2-4 pm, TSU School of Technology, Room 225. 713-524-2492.

Katy Prairie Conservancy 2nd Tues, 5:30 pm, Houston Environmental Center, 3015 Richmond, Suite 280. 713-523-6135.

Keep Houston Beautiful Quarterly meetings at 2700 Post Oak Blvd., Ste. 1728. 713-621-7020.

Legacy Land Trust 3rd Wed, 6 pm, Houston Environmental Center, 3015 Richmond, Suite 280. 713-524-2100.

League of Women Voters of Houston 2nd Thurs or Fri. 713-784-2923.

Mothers for Clean Air Quarterly. Call Jane Laping 713-526-0110.

Nature Discovery Center of Friends of Bellaire Parks 3rd Mon, 7 pm, Nature Discovery Center, 7112 Newcastle. 713-667-6550.

Native Plant Society of Texas 3rd Thurs (except Dec, Jan), 7pm, Houston Arboretum, 4501 Woodway, 713-431-6346.

Outdoor Nature Club 2nd Thurs, Sept-May. 7:30 pm (social begins at 7), Bayland Community Center, 6400 Bissonnet. 281-358-5407.

Piney Woods Wildlife Society 3rd Tues, 7:30 pm, Mercer Arboretum, 22306 Aldine Westfield Rd. 713-955-6667.

Sierra Club 1st Thur, 7:30 pm, Central Presbyterian, 3788 Richmond @ Timmons. 713-895-9309.

Texas Association of Environmental Professionals 3rd Thurs, 11:30 am, Brady's Landing, 8505 Cypress; Reservations: www.taep.org, reservation@taep.org, or 713-629-9119.

Urban Harvest Community Gardens Quarterly Meeting 4th Tuesday in January, April, July, 6-8 pm; Organic Gardening Classes weekly; workshops for outdoor classroom teachers annually summers. 1900 Kane. 713-880-5540.

Vegetarian Society of Houston 4th Wed, dinner mtg. at various local restaurants. 713-880-1055; Outreach volunteers call 713-880-1055.

White Oak Bayou Assoc 2nd Wed, 7:30 pm, Heights Fire House, 12th & Yale. For agenda, Fred Lazare, President, 713-864-9416 or Teresa Matlock, Treasurer, 713-864-3008.

Wildlife Rehab & Education Central/West: Carol at 713-661-5038 date and times. South/East: 2nd Wed 7 pm Sharon, 281-332-8319.

The Woodlands GREEN 2nd Tues (except Aug), 7:30 pm South County Library, Lake Robbins Rd. Karen Carter, 281-367-3457.

President's Letter

Very generally speaking, there are two reasons to go into business. The first, and most common, is to make money. There is nothing inherently wrong with making money. Many successful businesses are based on the prospect of being profitable.

The other reason to go into business is that you have a service or a product you believe could change the world. Edison believed this, as have Anita Roddick, Paul Hawken and many others.

What separates the two ideologies is how they're implemented. A company whose driving force for success is predicated on the return of capital to its investors is managed differently than a company whose mission is to create the best software (or window coverings, or whatever). The latter pours the majority of its revenues back into the company to keep it successfully servicing its customers.

So what's my point? In *Cradle to Cradle*, William McDonough brings our attention to several large corporations who are more interested in reinvesting their revenues back into the company to make their products or

services better. They build facilities for their employees with natural lighting and a small town feel like Herman Miller has done. They find new ways to manufacture their products, which make them safer for their employees, their communities and their customers as DesignTex has done.

With all the corporate accounting funny-business uncovered every day in the news, what is the advantage of CEOs deceiving their employees, those individuals who want to look up to leadership with respect and admiration? What is the difference between a salary of one million and ten million a year?

According to Paywatch (www.afcio.org/paywatch/case_coke.htm) Coca-Cola's CEO, Douglass Daft had a total compensation package of \$105,186,544 in 2001. That same year 5,200 employees were let go and the employees' 401-K assets were reduced by half as the share price fell.

Is this the corporate model we should admire, the unrestrained greed exercised by today's corporate leadership; a heartless organization that views its own survival tantamount to the survival of its community? I'm not just picking on Coke. This greed seems to be everywhere.

The alternative is small business, where local folks come together to create a product or service based on the needs of the community. It means the rebuilding of Main Street, USA. It means farmers growing produce locally and selling that produce directly to the consumer. There is no faceless corporation to hide behind. Your word is your bond, and your reputation is everything.

Sure there are things that cannot be produced locally in an efficient manner. We, as a society, have grown too accustomed to our luxury to give it up now. But why not try? Do I really need a new iPod, or those new swanky loafers?

What if instead I, as the CEO of a small service firm, reinvested my revenues back into my business, providing better health coverage for my dozen or so employees or invested it into my

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Citizens' Environmental Coalition

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November 2002

Newsletter &

Environmental Calendar

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