

# GBF GAZETTE

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Fall Gazette

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### *'Tis the Season!*

During this season of thanks and giving, we did not want to be remiss and forget to tell each of you how thankful we are for your support. The Galveston Bay Foundation does not exist without our members, volunteers, and sponsors.

We hope that each of you has a wonderful holiday spent with family and friends, reminiscing about the days of old and anticipating the joys to come.

From our family to yours, have a great holiday season!

## 2009 LyondellBasell Bike Around the Bay a Huge Success

Thank you to all the riders and volunteers who came out to the 2009 LyondellBasell Bike Around the Bay on October 10-11, 2009! Approximately 500 riders took on two days and 150 miles of bay area cycling. The riders truly enjoyed seeing the natural beauty of Galveston Bay from the unique perspective of a bicycle. They began in Anahuac and traveled to High Island, and the Bolivar Peninsula. After riders enjoyed lunch at Big Kahuna, they rode the Bolivar ferry to Galveston Island, where they finished at Moody Gardens. That evening, Kelly McGuire entertained the cyclists while the unfortunate weather found

its way to the island. Sunday, riders woke up to lots of wind, but nothing that would keep them from crossing over the Causeway and Fred Hartman bridges. Old School Tailgaters brought their two-story bus to Sylvan Beach on Sunday, which included televisions for football viewing, music and great food. Once the cyclists were energized for the final leg, they wound their way up to Houston Raceway Park, where they crossed the finish line. Thanks to everyone for a great ride! We've been listed as a BP MS 150 Recommended Ride so mark your calendars for October 16-17, 2010. Flip to page 8 for photos!

GBF thanks the following sponsors for making this ride a success:



<b>Galveston Bay Foundation</b>	<h1 style="margin: 0;">News from the President</h1>	<b>By Bob Stokes</b>
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Back in the summer of 2008, the Texas Department of State Health Services issued the first bay-wide consumption advisory for speckled trout and catfish. The advisory was issued because fish tissues of catfish and speckled trout were found to contain unsafe levels of dioxin and PCBs. Prior to this advisory, the consumption advisory was limited to only a small portion of Upper Galveston Bay and the Houston Ship Channel area. When the advisory was issued, it was a big deal to people all around Galveston Bay. It was front-page news for a period of time, but understandably lost attention and interest with the arrival of Hurricane Ike. Now that we have seen a steady long term recovery from Hurricane Ike, I am would like to put the dioxin water quality issue back on the front page.

Dioxin contamination is a very complicated thing. "Dioxin" includes a family of contaminants that are difficult to understand in terms of their behavior, toxicity, and how they move around in the environment. There are approximately 200 compounds in the family of chemicals collectively called dioxins, and they are released into the environment in a variety of ways. These include air release from burning chlorine-based chemical compounds with hydrocarbons in commercial or municipal waste incineration or from uncontrolled combustion sources such as accidental fires and open burning of waste. They can also be created through a variety of industrial processes, including chlorine bleaching of pulp and paper and certain types of chemical manufacturing and processing.

The region has a variety of historical and ongoing sources of dioxin impacting our water quality. It would be an incredibly complex and costly problem to completely address at once. There

is at least one "source" of dioxin, however, that sticks out like a sore thumb and merits immediate attention. During the late 1960s, a local paper company pumped paper and pulp waste containing large amounts of dioxin into a pit along the San Jacinto River near the I-10 bridge. The site subsided over time, and water from the river inundated the pits and spread dioxin along the San Jacinto River and Houston Ship Channel. This site is now a "Superfund" site and is going through a long-term Superfund review and cleanup. The Superfund cleanup process is a generally a good one, but can take many, many years to result in actual cleanup. The site continues to leak dioxin into the surrounding environment, and we have been told by the EPA that this is the worst Superfund site in Texas.

Therefore, the Executive Committee of GBF recently unanimously voted to retain the services of a local lawyer with expertise in Superfund cases to represent our interests in this matter. Our initial interest is to contain the dioxin from this site as soon as possible. We do not want to wait for five or ten more years before the dioxin at this site is contained. After containment, we will work to ensure an appropriate long-term cleanup is conducted so this dioxin site will not present a threat to our water quality at some point in the future. We are still developing a legal strategy in this matter, but I look forward to keeping you updated over time.

In the meantime, please know that we believe strongly in getting this site cleaned up as soon as possible and will be putting in all necessary effort to make that happen. We are also committed to working on the longer term and more widespread issues of dioxin contamination that may be impacting resources across our Bay.



## New Faces Around Galveston Bay Foundation



We are excited to welcome to the Galveston Bay Foundation staff Tiffany Anders, Conservation Technician; Emily Demmeck, Marketing and Membership Director; and Julie Mintzer, Director of Community Programs. They are already working hard to preserve, protect and enhance Galveston Bay! Please feel free to contact our newest staff members to get involved with the Galveston Bay Foundation, 281.332.3381.

**The Galveston Bay Foundation is a 501(c)(3) organization affiliated with Earth Share of Texas, and with Restore America's Estuaries.**



Tiffany Anders, Conservation Technician, left; Emily Demmeck, Marketing & Membership Director, right.



Julie Mintzer, Director of Community Programs, right.



# Strategies For Future Hurricane Mitigation

## A Galveston Bay Foundation Position Paper

Hurricane Ike caused terrible loss of life, injuries, property destruction and environmental harm to Galveston Island, Bolivar Peninsula and the Galveston Bay system. In response to this devastation, several proposals have been made which seek to limit damage from a future storm. These proposals are in the conceptual stage at this time and range from heavily engineered structures such as the "Ike Dike" to "softer" options such as those that emphasize increasing protected wetlands, increasing public and private open spaces on coastal barriers, and planning for sustainable development. Further study and review of all these concepts doubtless will take place over the next few years.

The Galveston Bay Foundation urges that any solutions proposed to limit damage from future storms recognize the importance of the natural environment, including our bay marshes, seagrasses and oyster reefs. GBF has worked hard with its partners on a number of restoration and shoreline protection projects across Galveston Bay. These projects were designed to restore lost wetlands and seagrasses, and to protect nearby shorelines from erosion. We are pleased to say that the vast majority of these projects weathered the storm and undoubtedly provided buffers from Ike's waves.

It is imperative that the potential environmental impacts of any proposed solution be adequately evaluated and incorporated into the decision making process before moving

forward with that solution. The Galveston Bay Foundation urges caution about a proposed solution that may create adverse long-term, and perhaps, unintended environmental and economic consequences. We would be concerned about a solution that alters the water exchange between the Bay and the Gulf, and about the effects the altered water exchange would have on both bay salinity and the ingress and egress of marine species between the Bay and the Gulf.

The review of environmental impacts must also address the full range of effects that a proposed solution would have on Texas beaches and barriers, including short term construction impacts and long term cumulative impacts. The entire evaluation process must address these considerations with scientific integrity.

Proposed solutions also should include non-structural approaches and address sustainable development concepts. Making these concepts the focus of any plan will help to make the Galveston Bay area safer for residents, the economy and the environment, and preserve the aesthetics that attract so many visitors to this area.

It is the mission of the Galveston Bay Foundation to preserve, protect and enhance the natural resources of the Galveston Bay estuarine system and its tributaries, for present users and for posterity. A hurricane protection plan, if any, should similarly adhere to these concepts.

## Correction

In the last edition of the GBF Gazette, Burnet Bay Wetlands Restoration project partner Mitsui & Co., Ltd. was inadvertently listed as Mitsui USA. Our apologies to our friends at Mitsui & CO., Ltd.!

We would also like to thank our 2009 Marsh Mania sponsors listed below!



## Become a Bay Ambassador

Do you love our Galveston Bay? Would you like to see it protected? Do you have an interest in spreading this message to our area youth? Then you may be a candidate to become a Galveston Bay Ambassador. These folks are volunteers who present a program with hands-on activities to classrooms and youth organizations in the Galveston Bay watershed. The program is specifically designed by the Galveston Bay Foundation to increase awareness of the Galveston Bay ecosystem, its many uses and its importance to humans and nature. Galveston Bay Foundation's training sessions ensure that its volunteers are capable of presenting an effective program with confidence.



During 2008, three trainings were held: two in February and the latest in the second week of June. The latter was given to a group of teachers from four different independent school districts. New Bay Ambassadors' comments after the training include, "If I were a child, I would really love this;" "Great program and has real value;" and "This was so cool! I would love to present to schools as an Ambassador. I teach 5<sup>th</sup> grade and this is right up my alley – creative, fun, and informative! Feel free to contact me to help out!"

Environmental sensitivity is developed at a young age. If it is not nurtured, it could be lost as we grow older. We **MUST** get into the schools to spread the message of the importance of our environment and how easy it is to help. Our current efforts in restoration will make no difference unless we educate the next generation!

### What does a Bay Ambassador do?

An Ambassador presents a 1 to 1.5 hour interactive program about Galveston Bay to schools and other youth groups in Harris, Brazoria, Chambers, and Galveston Counties. Presentations are usually during the school day and can be scheduled to be mutually convenient for the Ambassador and the group. The trained volunteer teaches classes about issues facing Galveston Bay, such as water quality, non-point source pollution, habitat loss, salinity balance and preservation of the Bay's natural resources. The program is tailored to the age of the K-12 student and is aligned with TEKS standards. The scripted program includes a variety of activities to encompass all of the various learning styles exhibited by students of all ages. Types of activities include: demonstrating water quality with a watershed model, creating brackish water, inspecting specimens, reading a story, showing slides and clarifying the geographical location of the Bay in relation to their school.

### The Opportunities ...

- Learn more about the Bay and continue environmental learning through free training by experienced staff
- Bring the Bay to new audiences
- Teach / share / interact with teachers
- Provide information about the Galveston Bay Foundation and its programs
- Work with preferred age group or all age groups
- Visit different groups, schools, and areas, or volunteer
- Close to home
- Meet new people who share your interests
- Gain career insights
- Receive a teacher packet that includes Bay information and activities, plus goodies for yourself
- Be a part of an organization that does positive things for students and Galveston Bay



## Your Annual Appeal contribution helps support on the ground restoration!



As 2009 comes to a close, we are reminded of what GBF has been able to accomplish with the help of donations given throughout the year. GBF hosted its signature “Marsh Mania” program for the eleventh consecutive year, and our “Get Hip To Habitat” school-based wetlands nursery program expanded in size to ten participating schools in the 2009-2010 school year. We brought attention to and worked to address the issues of marine debris; marsh, seagrass, and oyster reef losses; and damage to public access points around the Bay. We continue working on debris removal projects and other Hurricane Ike related efforts as long as necessary.

GBF has made a long term commitment to work to restore the bay’s wetlands and work towards a healthier Galveston Bay. We have achieved this through several large restoration projects, some of which are pictured here, including the Burnet Bay Wetlands Restoration Project, Sportsman Road Shoreline Protection Project, Pierce Marsh Restoration Complex, and Dickinson Bay Island Marsh Restoration and Oyster Reef Enhancement Project.

In 2010, we plan to continue these efforts and expand and improve where possible. **Our efforts can only be successful with your help.** We hope you will continue your support of the Galveston Bay Foundation with a tax deductible year end contribution. Annual Appeal letters will be in your mailbox soon, but you may also donate online at [www.galvbay.org](http://www.galvbay.org). Thank you for your consideration and support. We wish you a very happy holiday season!



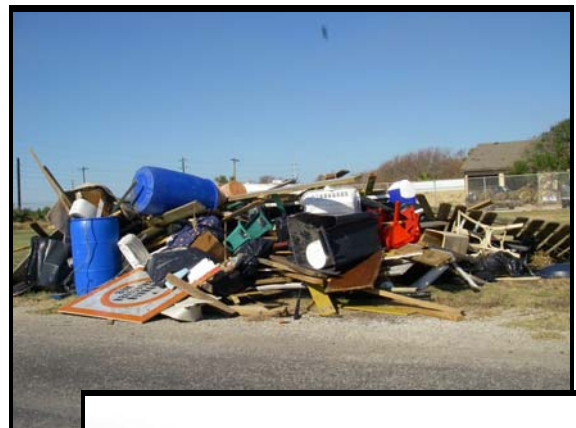
## GBF Receives “Honored Friend Award”

At the August 29<sup>th</sup> annual meeting of the turn a terrible event into something positive. At the FoGISP meeting, some attendees (FoGISP), the Galveston Bay Foundation dees stated that the clean up bolstered (GBF) received an “Honored Friend the spirits of Galveston and Galveston Award” for its Clean Up Around the Bay Bay area residents, as it was one of the trash clean up event at the state park in first concerted efforts to get things back to the aftermath of Hurricane Ike. Scott normal. In fact, the award states that the Jones accepted the award on behalf of Foundation “immediately respond[ed] to GBF from FoGISP, who honored GBF for the need of Galveston Island State Park the October 18, 2008 clean up that by organizing the first massive clean-up brought out over 200 volunteers to re- thereby setting a precedent for others to move everything from styrofoam cups to follow.”

plastics of all kinds to canoes and even pieces of local residents’ homes.

Ike derailed last year’s LyondellBasell Bike Around the Bay that would have occurred that day, but thanks to volunteers, board and staff, GBF was able to

GBF was proud to have partnered with the Friends of Galveston Island State Park to help in the recovery efforts and looks forward to future collaboration, albeit under happier circumstances.



Hundreds of volunteers helped make “Clean Up Around the Bay” a huge success.

## *Spotlight on...GBF Corporate Supporter* **Bike Barn**

Galveston Bay Foundation's third annual Lyondell-Basell Bike Around the Bay was held in October and we would like to take this opportunity to thank one of our ride sponsors, Bike Barn.

Bike Barn got its start in 1983 in a 1,200 square foot store in Clear Lake. In 1992 Bike Barn opened their second store in Rice Village on Kirby. Today, Bike Barn is in its 26<sup>th</sup> year of business and has grown to be Houston's largest independent bike dealer with 6 locations and a custom fit studio in the Houston Area.

From the beginning, Bike Barn has been centered around customers, families, recreational cyclists and local enthusiasts. It is important to them to support the Houston cycling community, and they show their support through their commitments with various rides and charities around the greater Houston area, including the LyondellBasell Bike Around the Bay.

Neil Bremner, co-owner of Bike Barn, says, "Bike Around the Bay is one of our favorite rides of the year. This ride highlights many wonderful features



Co-owners Neil Bremner and Lee Neathery enjoy some shade and drinks at Moody Gardens after the first day of the 2007 LyondellBasell Bike Around the Bay.



Cyclists enjoying a 2009 Bike Barn break point. Bike Barn strives to enhance everyone's cycling experience and share their passion for cycling by providing free weekly rides and one free monthly group ride. Visit [www.bikebarn.com](http://www.bikebarn.com) for details!

of Galveston Bay and introduces it to many Houstonians for the first time. We enjoy sharing this unique ride with our cycling friends and helping to support the great work of the Galveston Bay Foundation."

They also play a major role in these additional charities and causes: Cycle for Life, BP MS 150, Space Race, Tour de Pink, Houston's Bike to Work Day, and Workshop Houston.

Just as the Galveston Bay Foundation is passionate about Galveston Bay, Bike Barn is passionate about cycling and it's contagious!



The 2009 press conference was held at the Bike Barn Kirby location.

# 2009 LyondellBasell Bike Around the Bay Photos



## 2009 Business & Industry Luncheon

On Tuesday, September 22nd, GBF's members, friends, and trustees gathered at the Houston Club for the Galveston Bay Foundation's 2009 Business and Industry Luncheon. The theme of this year's event was "Celebrating Galveston Bay." The featured speaker at the luncheon was Matt Simmons, Chairman of Simmons Company International. Mr. Simmons presentation was "Galveston Bay: What Lies Beyond The

Fossil Fuel Horizon?" Our Honorary Luncheon Chairman was Walter Johnson, Chairman, Amegy Bank of Texas. The Galveston Bay Foundation is extremely grateful to all the individuals, businesses, and organizations that supported this year's luncheon. The funds raised at the luncheon are imperative to the success of the Galveston Bay Foundation's many programs.

Thank you to our 2009 Business & Industry Luncheon Sponsors listed below:

### Platinum Sponsors:

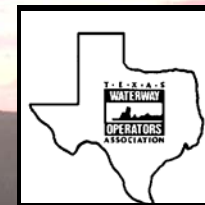
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# Redfish Raft-Up 2009

Galveston Bay Foundation's annual Redfish Raft-Up took place during Labor Day weekend, September 6th, next to Redfish Island in Galveston Bay. Hundreds of boats docked up around the Star Gazer to listen to a concert by singer/songwriter Kelly McGuire. A little bit of rain on Sunday afternoon didn't deter anyone from joining the fun!

Sanitation provided free holding tank pump-outs. Proceeds of the weekend's festivities go towards bringing awareness to Galveston Bay and to help fund Galveston Bay Foundation program projects, including our wetlands restoration projects.

In association with GBF's Boater Waste Education Campaign, "Pump It, Don't Dump It," Mari-

We hope you've saved the date for Labor Day 2010 when we'll do it all over again!

Kelly McGuire provided hours of entertainment on the Star Gazer for guests on board as well as those in the water. Thank you to **Kelly McGuire, Star Gazer Fleets, Maritime Sanitation and Port of Houston Authority** for making Redfish Raft-Up 2009 a fun event!



Hundreds of boats anchored up at Redfish Island. Anita White and her daughter, Kailey, a volunteer at GBF, enjoyed tickets aboard the Star Gazer courtesy of Wiredin.cc.



## GBF Mourns Passing of Friend and Redfish Raft-Up Founder

Thomas Robert Lober passed away November 8, 2009, after a brief illness. He was a beloved father, son, brother and uncle. Tom was the owner of Star Fleet Entertainment Yachts and it was Tom's idea to put together what has become "Redfish Raft-Up," an event held every Labor Day weekend at Redfish Island and benefiting the Galveston Bay Foundation. Tom was actively involved in the promotion and development of the Clear Lake Area and was always kind to the Galveston Bay Foundation. Tom was cremated and returned to the water that he loved so much in a private ceremony on Sunday, November 22, 2009, followed by a reception for all of

his dear friends and family at Star Fleet Marina. We are honored and grateful that Tom asked that GBF be the organization to receive gifts in his memory. Donations can be made to the Galveston Bay Foundation through our website, [www.galvbay.org](http://www.galvbay.org).



# Burnet Bay Wetlands Restoration

Work on the Burnet Bay Wetlands Restoration project continued this fall with the planting of all project mounds with marsh grass. This project will restore over a 30- acre complex of intertidal wetlands. "Marsh Mania" at the project was held on September 19<sup>th</sup> with volunteers from Mitsui USA and ITC. Subsequent planting events were held on October 17<sup>th</sup> with volunteers from NRG and on November 6<sup>th</sup> with volunteers from ConocoPhillips and students from the University of Houston Downtown. Thank you to all our volunteers! More photos and videos can be found on our website: [www.galvbay.org](http://www.galvbay.org) and on our Facebook page, search Galveston Bay Foundation.



Above: "Marsh Maniacs" from NRG enjoyed a fun day of planting on October 17th! Below: ConocoPhillips volunteers have time for a photo opp. after all the planting they accomplished!



Aerial views of Burnet Bay Wetlands Restoration project.



ITC and Mitsui USA volunteers planted marsh on September 19th.



Below is a completed mound with freshly planted cordgrass at the Burnet Bay Wetlands Restoration site.



Above: University of Houston Downtown students planted marsh grass on November 6th and had a great time!



## We miss you, Vanessa!

Vanessa was always willing to lend a hand, and a smile, to preserve and protect Galveston Bay. GBF misses her but wishes her the best!



GBF wished Vanessa Mintzer well as she and her husband, Ryan, moved back to Florida so she could begin her Ph.D. program in Interdisciplinary Ecology at the University of Florida. Her concentration is community-based conservation of wildlife/fishery resources in Latin America, specifically the study of Amazon river dolphins.

Vanessa, who was Galveston Bay Foundations' Director of Community Programs for over three years, pioneered the "Pump it, Don't Dump it" boater waste education campaign, revived our Bay Day event and brought it to the Kemah Boardwalk, and helped facilitate the move to our current database and website. She also initiated a series of GBF volunteer training sessions and helped coordinate the inaugural LyondellBasell Bike Around the Bay.

Thank you for all your hard work, Vanessa! We miss you!



**GALVESTON BAY FOUNDATION**

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**The mission of the Galveston Bay Foundation is to preserve, protect and enhance the natural resources of the Galveston Bay estuarine system for present users and for posterity.**



*GBF Gazette underwriting provided by our valued partner, the Port of Houston Authority.*

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**Photos in this month's issue of the GBF Gazette contributed by:**

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- Bike Barn**
- Clif Grim**
- GBF Staff**
- Neal Kelsoe**
- Mark Westerman**
- Mary Love**
- Timothy Love**
- Wiredin.cc**

Galveston Bay Foundation has received a 4-star rating from Charity Navigator, America's largest and most-utilized independent evaluator of charities. You can see our listing on their website, [www.charitynavigator.org](http://www.charitynavigator.org).



**For event details and volunteer opportunities, visit our website at [www.galvbay.org](http://www.galvbay.org).**



Thanks to Steve Turner, CEO of Moody Review, Inc., for the donation of two office desks, a desk chair, and four wooden file drawers. GBF is growing and its partners like Moody Review, Inc. who help us. A special thanks to Leo Oliver of Moody Review, Inc. for helping us locate and load all these pieces, all on his day off. Thanks again to Moody Review, Inc.!

