

Volunteers Needed at Baytown's Environmental Education Gems

The Eddie V. Gray Wetlands Education Center at 1724 Market Street and the Baytown Nature Center, 6213 Bayway Drive, Baytown's environmental education jewels, are currently seeking volunteers who share a passion for the environment, enjoy working with children, and strive to make a difference in their community. The sister sites will hold a joint orientation/basic training on Tuesday, September 6 at the Wetlands Center.

Volunteer orientation/basic training begins with an orientation session from 8:30 am – 11:30 am which covers the mission, history, facilities and future of the two centers. Prospective volunteers will learn about the centers' programs and the type of help needed. After a lunch break, participants who wish to work in the environmental education programs will attend the Basic Training session from 12:30 – 3:30 pm. Further training with experienced volunteers will occur when student field trips to the Wetlands Center and Nature Center begin in September.

During the school year, all Goose Creek Consolidated Independent School District fifth and seventh graders visit the Wetlands Center/Nature Center for a day. Fifth-grade students participate in ExxonMobil's *Wetlands Ecology* program and Bayer's *Making Science Make Sense* program while seventh graders enjoy the *Liquid Science* program, sponsored by Rotary Club of Baytown. During the fall and spring Baytown Nature Center hosts *Back to the Bay* for high school science students. Volunteers are needed to teach and assist with these programs. Previous teaching experience is not required, but is helpful. All the basic information for each program will be provided. Other educational offerings at the two facilities include Boy and Girl Scout badge workshops, birthday parties, weekly pre-school programs, outreach opportunities, spring, summer and winter camps, night hikes and monthly family nature programs.

Other volunteer duties such as maintenance, carpentry or animal care at the Wetlands Center and stewardship/maintenance work at the Nature Center do not require further formal training; however do require hands-on training.

"Baytown is fortunate to have two such special facilities as the Nature Center and Wetlands Center," said Outreach/Volunteer Coordinator Mary Alice Trumble. "Our award-winning environmental education programs have earned national recognition. Now we're looking for people in the community who want to ensure these educational opportunities continue for our children and the community."

Reservations for the training should be made no later than Wednesday, August 31. For more information, to register or to request a Volunteer Opportunities brochure, phone the Wetlands Center at 281-420-7128 or send email to MaryAlice.Trumble@baytown.org

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Volunteers teaching "Wetlands in a Pan" activity to a group of fifth grade students at the Wetlands Center



Ninth grade students during "Back to the Bay" at Baytown Nature Center