Dear Members and Friends... by Becky Etzler, Executive Director

Spring has sprung. The birds are chirping, the squirrels are chattering, the bees are buzzing and the plants are budding and blooming. If you are an allergy sufferer this may not exactly be your favorite time of year. But I have no doubt, you still appreciate the renewal and freshness of it all.

Like nature, even organizations need a bit of renewal and revitalizing. Last month, Peter Lewis, RNC’s Board President mentioned that both the mission and vision statements were under review. Our Board of Directors adopted new statements. While our mission has not changed, the message is now more succinct:

**Advancing the stewardship of our environment.**

Having achieved the old vision statement, a new one was definitely in order:

**To be the leader in education and discovery of our natural world.**

These changes are not mere exercises in rhetoric. People support organizations that hold meaning for them. They believe in the mission and direction. But most importantly, they support organizations that walk the talk. Riverside Nature Center exemplifies that kind of dedication.

With these changes, our volunteers, members and staff should proudly adopt and now more easily recite our mission and vision.

Speaking of supporting organizations, a HUGE thank you to everyone who supported RNC in the BiG-Give on March 22. We raised $2,740 for our KISD 2nd Grade Field Day Scholarship program. It is not official yet, but rumor has it that we came in second for money raised in the “extra small/small environment category” with a prize of $1,500. A big shout out to Pint & Plow for hosting us and providing free beer to several lucky donors.

Take some time and stop by to smell the flowers, listen to the birds, and just enjoy spring at the nature center.

Until next time,

Becky

Painted lady on Madrone by Susan Sander
Native Plant Society of Texas - Kerrville Chapter & Riverside Nature Center invite you to...

2018 Spring Native Plant Sale & Festival
Saturday April 21st 9am - 2pm
Free Family Fun

Native Plant Sale
• Native Plants selected to thrive in our climate & soil
• Plant experts to answer questions & offer advice
• Save! One day tax-free shopping for plants & gifts

All net proceeds benefit RNC & NPSOT education efforts.

9-9:50am: Wildflowers and Pollinators: Making Connections

Join Park Interpreter and Naturalist Craig Hensley from Guadalupe River State Park for an introductory look at the inter-relationships between our Hill Country wildflowers and pollinators. You’ll learn which wildflowers provide the greatest benefit to bees and butterflies.

10-11am: Bugs-R-Us

Ranger Craig is ready to head into the wilds in search of butterflies, dragonflies and other six-legged critters. We’ll provide the nets and a great deal of learning and fun as we explore the world of insects eye-to-compound eye.

Informative Displays
Ask the Plant Expert
Hill Country Master Naturalists
Hill Country Master Gardeners
UGRA- Water Quality & Conservation
Glory Garden * Monarch Watch
Hill Country Archeological Association
Texas Hill Country Beekeepers
RNC * NPSOT-Kerrville Chapter

Kids’ Activities
Check Website for Details
11am-1:30pm

For More Details: 830-257-4837
www.riversidenaturecenter.org
150 Francisco Lemos Street • Kerrville, Texas 78028
It is always refreshing to witness the first blaze of color when winter transitions to welcome warmer temps. We can count on agarita to show yellow blooms, followed by a red berry. The sharp pointed leaves qualify this shrub as a nursery plant because it protects other edible plants from deer.

The red berry from agarita and barberry can both be turned into yummy jelly or jam. I’ve been told the first step is to place a sheet on the ground under the plant when the berries are soft and ripe. Then whack it with a broom to force the berries to fall to the sheet. Lift the sheet away and you are ready for jelly-making in your kitchen.

It is noteworthy that there are many native plants safe for us to digest. Look for specimens of agarita and barberry on the Francisco Lemos side of the berm.

Earlier this Spring there have been several beautiful white fragrant bloomers and one beautiful tree remains near the back porch of the Visitor’s Center ~ the Mexican plum. The clusters of five-petaled white flowers are eye-catching. Birds often take cover in the safety of their brush and return to eat their tart fruit that ripens soon after in the summer.
Another beloved Hill Country fragrant spring bloomer is the Texas mountain laurel. In many cases the RNC natives are planted with purposeful location in mind. There are large trimmed bushes on either side of the RNC entrance walkway. The walls of the tool shed at the end of the drive as you enter the parking area are disguised by untrimmed bushes. It is a slow grower, but the blooms of this evergreen attracts bees and butterflies that are worth the wait. Best of all, deer do not eat this native, so it does not need fencing.

A beautiful specimen of Texas redbud is at the beginning of River Trail at RNC. It can been seen all over town. It is drought tolerant and can grow in partial shade/full sun and in poor soil (the gardener’s trifecta challenge) ~ truly a Hill Country asset. Butterflies really go for the popular reddish brown blooms too.

Check out all these bloomers as spring emerges at RNC.
Gift Shop Features New Artist

**SCdesigns**

I’m a Native Texan who grew up in Fort Worth, but the Hill Country has been my home for the last 18 years. I’ve always been creative, whether in play as a child or later with photography and now making jewelry.

Photography will always be a passion of mine. I studied at the University of Texas-Arlington and still enter shows and contests all over Texas. I am currently the photographer for the Hunt Garden Club.

Precious Metal Clay was introduced to me several years ago. You work it like clay, molding, firing and polishing the pieces. The end result is nothing short of a spectacular piece of .999 silver jewelry! I use PMC silver and copper, as well mixed metals and porcelain.

**Sarah Cowen**

**SCdesigns**
Hunt, Texas

Also, there’s a new t-shirt design available in the Gift Shop - Milkweed Village.
## APRIL 2018 Riverside Nature Center Upcoming Events/Programs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>April 10</td>
<td>1:30-3:00pm</td>
<td>Native Plant Society of Texas/ Kerrville Chapter Meeting: A Virtual Plant Walk at Enchanted Rock</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 16</td>
<td>8:30pm</td>
<td>Star Party @ the Loftis Observatory, Schreiner University. Join Dr. Kim Ardvisson for an evening of stellar exploration.</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 17</td>
<td>10:30-11:30am</td>
<td>NEd Talk: BATS! Learn about these amazing animals and why they are so important to us. Presented by Fran Hutchins, Director of Bracken Cave Preserve.</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 20</td>
<td>4:30-6:00pm</td>
<td>Members Only Native Plant Sale. NPSOT and RNC Members are invited to shop before the public sale on Saturday.</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 21</td>
<td>9am-2pm</td>
<td>Spring Native Plant Sale &amp; Festival. See flyer for more information. You don’t want to miss Craig Hensley’s Wildflowers &amp; Pollinators talk at 9:00am or his kid friendly Bugs-R-Us at 10:00am.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 21</td>
<td>8:00-9:00am</td>
<td>Bird Walk &amp; Talk. Join Paul and Deloris Sellin in front of the Visitor Center for a stroll along the Guadalupe River.</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 28</td>
<td>5:00-7:00pm</td>
<td>An Evening in the Garden An evening of music, wine and hors d'oeuvres for prospective members. Tickets are available for $35.00 (see page 11 for more details).</td>
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**SAVE THE DATE:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>June 9</td>
<td>11:00am-3:00pm</td>
<td>Get Outdoors Day @ Louise Hays Park</td>
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Riverside Nature Center Presents:

April 2018 NEd Talk - BATS!
Presented by Fran Hutchins
Director of the Bracken Cave Preserve

Tuesday, April 17th
10:30 a.m.-11:30 a.m.

Fran Hutchins is a public speaker and educator as well as a Texas Master Naturalist, Caver and Eagle Scout. He was the Winner of the US Forest Service “Wings Across America” Award for Bats LIVE 2013

Suggested donation of $5.00
Please RSVP
Call (830)257-4837 or email RNC.kerrville@gmail.com
Riverside Nature Center’s annual KISD 4th Grade Field Days is just around the corner; May 18, 22, 23 & 24th.

Students from all four elementary schools spend a full day of environmental exploration and learning.

If you have the time and want to share your passion for nature, this is a great opportunity. Volunteers are needed to assist learning station leaders in the following areas:

- Pollinators & Wildflowers
- Decomposers & Composting
- Soils & Seeds
- Life Cycles

For more information, contact Becky at director@riversidenaturecenter.org or 257-4837. Lunch will be provided.
Build It and They Will Come

Construction has begun on RNC’s newest feature: a bird viewing blind. John Quinby designed and is constructing this feature to enhance the bird viewing potential here at the nature center. This area of the grounds was already planted specifically with plants that provide seed, such as native Texas cupgrass, green sprangletop and common sunflower. With the addition of some shrubs for shelter, a few feeders and a small recirculating water feature this area should be quite attractive to a variety of local and migrating birds. Birders will enjoy observing and photographing the feathered visitors and this area will serve as a wonderful teaching opportunity for children.

Stay tuned for more details as they develop.
NEW MEMBERS
2/21/18 - 3/26/18
(Does not include renewals)
Marsha Baumann

RNC DONORS
2/21/18 - 3/26/18

Larry Altman
Francesca Aquino
Marsha Baumann
Kristine Bobbitt
Michael & Karen Burkett
Tara Bushnoe
Kelly Clark
Linore Cleveland
Stanely Cobbs
Teresa Coleman
Vern Crawford
Ann Dietert
Rita & Erik Doherty
Frank Dunlap
Richard Ertel
Becky Etzler
Judith B. Ferguson
Linda Fielding
Carl Hix
Martha Hix
Katy Kappel
Peter Lewis
James Noe
Mr. & Mrs. Gary Noller
Barbara Oates
Patty & Greg Pasztor
Harriet Redwine
Liz Ross
Susan M. Sander
Don Shannonhouse
Susan Sommers
Jim & Priscilla Stanley
Buck Thompson
Peggy Thompson
Paul Urban
An Evening in the Garden...

Where old friends of Riverside Nature Center welcome and encourage new friends.

Live music
Wine & Light Hors d'oeuvres
Door Prize

Saturday, April 28th
5:00-7:00 pm
Tickets $35 per person
RSVP by April 18th
(830) 257-4837 or
http://www.riversidenaturecenter.org
What is a Riverside Nature Center?

Located at the confluence of the Guadalupe River and Town Creek in the Hill Country town of Kerrville —2010 population, 22,347— Riverside Nature Center is a 501[c][3] nonprofit organization, owned by its members and primarily operated by volunteers.

Our mission is to foster greater public awareness and appreciation of the Texas Hill Country’s natural resources through education, information, and by example. We provide quality educational experiences for the community’s children, adults and families; and we serve as a resource center for the community on native plants and nature related information.

RNC OFFICERS

Peter Lewis - President
Rick Ertel - Past President
Barbara Oates - Vice President
Judy Ferguson - Secretary
Jeff Gelsone - Treasurer

BOARD MEMBERS

Kris Bobbitt
Tara Bushnoe
Frank Dunlap
Malcolm Matthews
Liz Ross
Peggy Thompson