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Texas Stream Team

Working to Protect Our Waterways

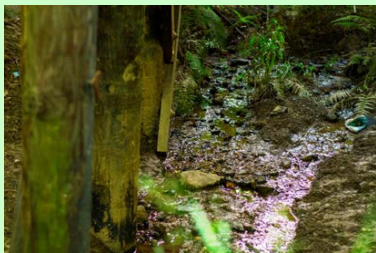
Volume 2015 Issue 2



SKILLS CHECK

This month's video demonstrates the steps for measuring the conductivity of a water sample using a calibrated high or low range conductivity meter.

[Review the procedure on YouTube.](#)



Japhet Creek
(photo credit Christopher Patterson)

TST in the News

Read about our region's TST in the July edition of [Dock Line](#) magazine.

QUICK LINKS

to our partners
and friends. . .

MONITOR SPOTLIGHT

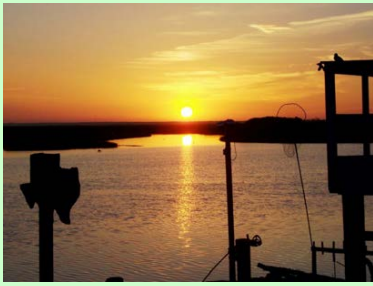
Jim Ohmart and Eileen Hatcher



Japhet Creek is the only uncovered, unchanneled, natural stream tributary of Buffalo Bayou east of downtown Houston.

When Jim Ohmart and Eileen Hatcher purchased the historic Isidore Japhet homestead on the creek 27 years ago, the inner-city neighborhood was nearly empty because it was downwind of an antiquated sewage plant closed by the EPA. While researching the property, they learned as much as they could about the continued existence of possible pollution sources since the stream had become a dumping ground.

As they helped redevelop the neighborhood, they remained concerned about the quality of the water in the little creek that flowed through their community.



Take Care of Texas
Keep Texas Beautiful
Galveston Bay Foundation
Galveston Bay Estuary Program
Bayou Preservation Association
Scenic Galveston, Inc.
Buffalo Bayou Partnership



Calendar of Events

9/12: [Cypress Creek on-the-water cleanup \(Mercer Arboretum\)](#)
9/19: [Cypress Creek on-the-water cleanup \(Mercer Arboretum\)](#)
10/9: [Bayou Preservation Association Symposium](#)

Deadline for inclusion in the next issue is October 15.

The Texas Coastal Watershed Program has a new website, valuewetlands.tamu.edu to show landowners on the Upper Texas Gulf Coast how conserving wetlands can be an asset and source of economic benefit. It is a clearinghouse of programs and tools for landowners to participate in wetland conservation to be eligible for a variety of benefits and learn more about wetland land types in Texas, ecological services, and permitting. Videos from the Wetland Economic Benefits Workshop are available online.



... [READ MORE](#)

(Photo Credit Christopher Patterson)



What happens to data collected by TST volunteers?

According to Travis Tidwell, TST monitoring program coordinator, "once data is submitted to TST, it undergoes quality assurance and is then stored in the TST database.

"TST staff analyze specific watersheds once enough data has been collected, usually two years worth," Tidwell said. The analyses are published in TCEQ approved documents available to the public; projected on an interactive map, the [Data Viewer](#), where anyone can click on a location and pull up the historic dataset for that site; and finally, submitted to the [EPA's STORET](#) water quality database.

"The dataset is open source and is available to anyone who is interested in water quality," Tidwell added. "It has been used by students, researchers, and the general public. The data is also available to our partners to give them an idea about water quality in areas where they may not have a professionally monitored site."

Texas Stream Team Paddlers

A newly launched Texas Stream Team Paddlers project at the Meadows Center for Water and the Environment is expanding opportunities for students, educators, outdoor enthusiasts, and all manner of paddlers to collect data from new or hard-to-reach locales. And, in doing so, they will join a team of nearly 8,000 volunteers who, since 1991, have given approximately 45,000 hours of their time, service valued at more than a \$1 million, to protect the waters of Texas.

Watch a [video](#) about the Paddlers. Then, to learn how you can get involved, contact Travis Tidwell at (512) 245-9148 or via email at txstreamteam@txstate.edu.

TECHNICAL TERRITORY

By Paniz Bighash, H-GAC Environmental Planner

What is Calibration? Why is it Important?

For TST volunteers, calibration is not only the first step in water quality monitoring, but also the most important. All water quality monitoring instruments, from the simplest conductivity meter to the most complex analytical instruments, must be calibrated regularly to ensure the recorded measurements are as precise as possible with minimal margins of error. But what does calibration mean? Well, it's simple - just like musical instruments, water quality instruments must be finely tuned before they're used to make sure results are accurate and "in tune." If an instrument sits unused for extended periods of



Storm Front Coming to Hobby Center

NobleMotion Dance, known for its physically daring and visually stunning work, brings *Storm Front: Experience the Elements* to the Hobby Center in August.

Parts of this show were featured at several [River, Lakes, Bays 'N Bayous Trash Bash®](#) locations in March.

Trash Bash® will host an informational table and presentation at the shows on August 28 and 29. The show features a storm front on stage as 33 dancers interact with wind, rain, snow, and light. Get ticket information at www.noblemotiondance.com.



Pet Waste Pollutes

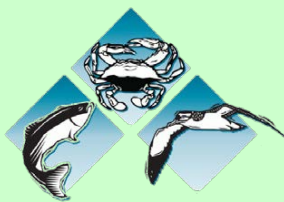
H-GAC Water Resources exhibited at the Houston World Series of Dog Shows in July. The booth focused on the [proper disposal of pet waste](#) to help reduce bacteria in waterways. Pet owners played Pitch the Poop, signed the pledge and took a survey on pet waste disposal habits to provide data for future outreach planning. If you are a dog owner, you can help by taking the [survey](#).

time, it may drift and give inaccurate measurements if not calibrated before use. The standard solutions you use are at a set value and calibration forces your instruments to adjust to that set value. Any drift that may have occurred during storage is set back to its original point during calibration, so be sure to "tune" up your instruments before heading out to monitor.



Water is our most precious resource. We drink it, bathe in it, and play in it. We share our water with all of the other living things on the planet. And without water, none of us can survive. H-GAC's [Clean Waters Initiative](#) (CWI) program offers workshops that help local governments, landowners, and citizens develop effective strategies to reduce pollution in our area waterways to protect this finite resource.

Help improve CWI workshops by taking a [planning survey](#). Responses will be used to help plan future workshop topics.



RIVER, LAKES BAYS 'N BAYOUS TRASH BASH.

The 23rd River, Lakes, Bays 'N Bayous Trash Bash® is set for Saturday, April 2, 2016.

BE A SPONSOR Trash Bash® is made possible through generous contributions and support by sponsors. Please check out available [Sponsorship Levels and Benefits](#) to see how your organization can benefit as a Trash Bash® partner while making a significant positive impact on local waterways.

VOLUNTEER Since its inception, more than 98,000 volunteers have collected nearly 2,100 tons of trash, 1.3 tons of recyclable materials and 9,600 tires. It's easy to volunteer - as an individual or with a large group. [Learn how](#) to volunteer to help clean up and promote a healthy Galveston Bay watershed.

Mark your calendar for Saturday, April 2, 2016, to "Clean It Like You Mean It!"

Email Becki.Begley@h-gac.com or call 713-993-2410 with questions, comments, calendar items or suggestions for future newsletters.

The Houston-Galveston Area Council is the regional organization through which local governments consider issues and cooperate in solving area wide problems. We invite you to subscribe to the [Community and Environmental Update](#), a monthly e-newsletter to keep you informed about the many community planning, economic development and environmental planning programs going on at H-GAC.

[Texas Stream Team at The Meadows Center for Water and the Environment at Texas State University](#) is dedicated to understanding and protecting the 191,000 miles of Texas waterways. For more information, contact Travis Tidwell at 512.245.9148 or via email at TxStreamTeam@txstate.edu.

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Houston-Galveston Area Council | 3555 Timmons Lane | Suite 120 | Houston | TX | 77027