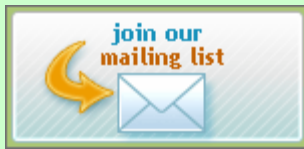


# Texas Stream Team

Working to Protect Our Waterways

Volume 2015 Issue 3



## SKILLS CHECK



This month's video contains a detailed step-by-step process to show how testers should fix the oxygen in their samples.

[Review the procedure on YouTube.](#)

## Spotlight Photo



Sugar Creek at Nails Drive

## TST in the News

If you have been part of the Texas Stream Team for a while, you may know Travis Tidwell at Texas State University's Meadows Center for Water

## MONITOR SPOTLIGHT

### Don & Penny Johnson

They taught and when they retired they wanted to learn. That's how Don and Penny Johnson became involved with Texas Stream Team.

Don was a hands-on science trainer for Fort Bend ISD and Penny grew up on a Minnesota truck farm where the environment was critical to its livelihood. Their teaching careers included stops in Hawaii, the Philippines, Japan, and Germany before they settled in Texas. Valuing nature and a clean environment is important to them.

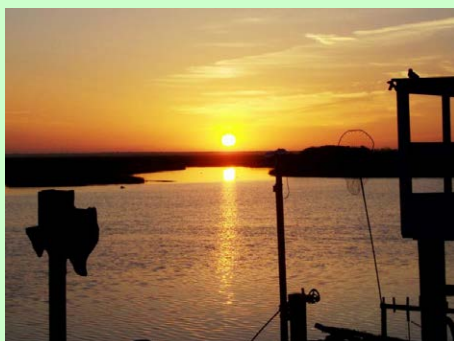


To scratch that itch, the Johnsons became certified as Master Gardeners and Master Naturalists. It was through the Coastal Prairie Master Naturalist Chapter (Fort Bend Co.) that they learned about TST training. They were curious about the testing process and learning more about the quality of water in their local area. They wanted to become involved in a volunteer project that would make a meaningful contribution to the community and also participate in a state-wide program.

For the past nine years, they have done volunteer monitoring at site #80386 (Sugar Creek at Nails Drive, see Spotlight Photo ) and, in October 2015, added a second monitoring site in Missouri City.

and the Environment. He has left for a position as a fisheries biologist with Texas Parks & Wildlife on their Kills & Spills Team. We wish him the best and are glad that we will still have opportunities to work with him at Texas Parks & Wildlife.

## QUICK LINKS to our partners and friends. . .



[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

**November 17**  
[Clean Waters Initiative Webinar](#)  
*(Overview of Texas Land Trends)*  
**December 4**  
[H-GAC Fall Planning Workshop](#)  
**December 8**  
[Clean Rivers Program Regional Monitoring Workshop](#)  
**January 13-14**  
[Galveston Bay Estuary Program Symposium](#)

*Deadline for inclusion in the next issue is January 15.*



Monitoring water sometimes requires creativity to get the job done. At the Johnsons' site, during drought conditions sometimes the water level is so low that it is difficult to collect the water needed to run the tests. At other times, high weeds along the shore present problems just getting to the creek.

Testing variables are also challenging. The pair has observed wide variation in conductivity (200-710) that did not match what they would have predicted. The subjectivity of the colors on the pH scale sometimes results in inconsistent pH scores. The Johnsons strive to better understand the factors influencing these variations.

They appreciate that their small efforts fit into the larger state water quality monitoring picture. They encourage Master Naturalist friends to consider TST volunteering.

They have definitely earned bonus points for using their citizen scientists' skills to help protect our valuable water resources!



**The 23rd River, Lakes, Bays 'N Bayous Trash Bash is 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 .

Learn how you can  
"Clean It Like You Mean It!"  
at [www.TrashBash.org](http://www.TrashBash.org).

## **Volunteers protect the Chesapeake Bay, too!**

*C&EN Magazine* published an article on a groups of citizen scientists in Maryland's Chesapeake Bay region.



## **TECHNICAL TERRITORY**

*By Paniz Bighash, H-GAC Environmental Planner*

H-GAC recently launched an updated version of the [Water Resources Information Map \(WRIM\)](#) with a new, user friendly layout that can be accessed through any platform including android, iPhone, tablet, and home computer.

By clicking on the Monitoring Stations tab, information is available about not only about Texas Stream Team monitoring stations, but all Clean Rivers Program monitoring stations in the region. You can retrieve historical data, find who samples each station, and see pictures of sampling locations by simply clicking on the site. The WRIM also provides information about the health of local waterways including current impairments and concerns, as well as interesting facts and educational information about water quality in general.

Texas Stream Team monthly water quality data is uploaded onto the WRIM on a quarterly basis. The next TST data upload is scheduled for November of 2015. Email pictures of your monitoring station to [Stream Team](#) to include on the website if there is not one up already. Check out the new [WRIM](#) and look up your Texas Stream Team monitoring station today.

## **What do dedicated Stream Team volunteers do on vacation?**

It was shared by a TST volunteer monitor. Read the article [online](#).

### Galveston Bay Foundation launches online pollution reporting tool

With the Galveston Bay Action Network pollution reporting tool, you can be the #EyesOnGalvBay.

The Galveston Bay Foundation makes it easy to report pollution online. Help keep Galveston Bay clean!



Easily report pollution events at [www.galvbay.org/gban](http://www.galvbay.org/gban) or even view previous reports on the interactive map. Bookmark this great reporting tool to your smart phone home screen for easy reporting while on the go!

### FEATURE PHOTO



Learning about water quality from grandparents

Help spread the word about Texas Stream Team!



They go visit their grandchildren. And take along some expired water quality reagents. Then their grandkids, and a few of their friends, spend an afternoon in a California wetlands learning about water and how it is tested.

That's exactly what volunteer monitors Pete and Peggy Romfh did on their vacation this summer!

Along with their water observations, the groups observed birds, mammals, and some "crawly things" (large snails) along the water's edge. Other activities included culturing microbes from around the house and watching mung beans and yeast grow under a microscope.



Finally, they demonstrated "natural selection" with jellybeans. Monarch butterflies are like black jellybeans. They taste bad, so predators tend to avoid eating them and they wind up increasing their percentage in the population.

Check the [TST website](#) or contact [Will Merrell](#) at 713-993-4594 for upcoming training sessions.

Who says old folks are "fuddy duddies"? According to the Romfhs, they certainly aren't!

Email [Becki.Begley@h-gac.com](mailto: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 [TxStreamTeam@txstate.edu](mailto:TxStreamTeam@txstate.edu).*