



# Bayou Bartholomew Alliance NEWSLETTER



Winter 2004  
Vol. 16.

## Bayou Bartholomew Trail Open to Visitors !!



Trail volunteers (left) opened up the corridor. Liz Heitman moves a log from the corridor (right). The trail is complete except for placing interpretive panels. (Photos by Delos McCauley)



The long awaited Bayou Bartholomew Nature Trail on Hazel Street near I-530 in Pine Bluff is now complete for the public to enjoy. There are a few items to complete such as installing the interpretive signs which will educate hikers to the resources of the Bayou Bartholomew. We anticipate that the signs will be installed within the next month.

A ceremony was held on November 6, 2003 dedicating the trail and honoring those who graciously donated funds and time for its completion. For a list of volunteers, look at the Volume 13 edition of the BBA Newsletter. Financial contributors included the Arkansas Highway and Transportation Department, the Trinity Foundation, the Catherine Seabrook Beautification Fund, and Mr. Ferd Bellingrath. Without the help of those contributors, the trail would not have been possible.

Mr. Delos McCauley, a local member of the Three Rivers Audubon Society, has diligently been recording bird life in the natural area. He has compiled a list of birds seen to date so that all bird watchers may check off their sightings. He has developed a tri-fold pamphlet which is available to those who wish to record their bird sightings. Please contact the BBA Coordinator for a copy.

The Bayou Bartholomew Alliance President, Dr. Curtis Merrell, announced at the trail dedication that the trail was to be named the William (Bill) G. Layher Bayou Bartholomew Trail. Dr. Layher was humbled and honored at the announcement. Dr. Layher serves as the Coordinator for the Bayou Bartholomew Alliance.

The new nature trail offers a variety of habitats to wander through and enjoy. Obviously, collection of plants or animals is not allowed. Please use the trail but if you carry items in, please remove them when you leave. No motorized vehicles are allowed on the trail. We have already had a few four wheelers on the trail causing some damage. Should you see such activity, please call the BBA coordinator at 870-879-4808.

**The Bayou Bartholomew Alliance will host a work day on March 13 at 9:00 a.m. until noon to spruce up the trail. Bring your rakes, shovels, saws, and leaf blowers if you would like to help. See you there!**

## **LOUISIANIAN JOINS BOARD**

Elton Kennedy, a prominent rice farmer, business man, and conservationist from Mer Rouge, Louisiana, has become the latest member of the Bayou Bartholomew Alliance (BBA) Board of Directors. Elton accepted the Board's invitation to join and was recently approved unanimously by the Board. He is a former Board Member of the Louisiana Nature Conservancy. He is a well known and highly respected rice farmer, and owner and President of Delta Land and Farm Management Co., LLC, which manages substantial acres of farm, ranch and timber land. He is also the owner and President of Kennedy Rice Dryers, LLC, a grain elevator and grain dealer with four locations in Northeast Louisiana.

Presently, he is the Chairman of the Board of Directors of American Horizon Bank, with locations in Bastrop, Monroe and Ruston. Elton is also the Director of Riviana Foods, Inc. of Houston, Texas and a member of various closely held corporations.

The Bayou Bartholomew Alliance recently expanded its efforts to include the Louisiana portion of the Bayou Bartholomew. Mr. Kennedy will certainly provide great representation for the Louisiana Bayou Bartholomew watershed. The BBA has been collaborating with the Louisiana Nature Conservancy (LNC) for several years and is currently engaged in a major project involving the LNC, Arkansas Nature Conservancy, Arkansas Department of Environmental Quality, and Winrock International.

Elton considers himself a conservationist and he said he is very interested in helping restore and preserve Bayou Bartholomew. Welcome aboard!!!!

## **NEW ASSISTANT HIRED**

The Bayou Bartholomew Alliance recently received a grant by partnering with Winrock International, The Louisiana Nature Conservancy, and ADEQ. Funds from the Environmental Protection Agency were made available to hire an assistant to work on Bayou Bartholomew related projects such as conservation easements. We are pleased to announce that Mr. Eric Brinkman was selected to fill this position.

Eric is a native Arkansan. He recently graduated from Arkansas Tech University with a degree in Fisheries and Wildlife Biology. With his biological background and computer skills, Eric will enhance the operations of the BBA tremendously.

Eric will work from the office of Layher BioLogics RTEC, Inc. in Pine Bluff. Should you be interested in our conservation easement program, please give either Eric or the BBA Coordinator a call. They will be happy to visit with you regarding this initiative which is growing along the Bayou.

## **FREE SEMINAR ON CONSERVATION PROGRAMS OF THE NEW FARM BILL!!!!**

**MARCH 4, 2004**

**9:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.**

**McGehee Municipal Building Courtroom Behind Fire Department**

**Sponsored by:**

**Arkansas Game and Fish Commission and the Desha County Extension Service  
Landowners in the Bayou Bartholomew Watershed (from any County) are welcome!**

**Programs Covered**

**The Conservation Reserve Program (CRP)**

**Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP)**

**Wildlife Habitat Incentive Program (WHIP)**

**Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP)**

**BBA Conservation Easement Program**

## **CURRENT BBA BOARD MEMBERSHIP**

Howard and Cynthia Kimbrell, Charter Members of the BBA Board, recently moved to Northwest Arkansas. They had resided in Jefferson County, near the Lincoln County Line, on the banks of the Bayou Bartholomew near Ladd. Howard farmed land in Lincoln and Jefferson Counties. The BBA Board recently voted to place Howard and Cynthia on "Inactive Status". Their efforts in restoring wildlife habitat, participating in clean-ups, serving as BBA accountants, and many other activities are greatly appreciated.

With the Kimbrell's moving and the addition of Elton Kennedy, the BBA Board has the following representation:

Ashley County	George Pugh and Jack Edwards
Drew County	John McClendon and Dr. Curtis Merrell
Lincoln County	Robert Mitchell
Jefferson County	Dr. Robert Butler
Morehouse Parish, La.	Elton Kennedy

The Board is currently discussing Board Membership with individuals in Jefferson, Desha, and Lincoln Counties. The BBA Board Members are all volunteers, dedicated to the goals of the Alliance. They receive no pay and have never requested re-imbursement for any expenses. They donate their time, effort, and guidance for the benefit of Bayou Bartholomew and the landowners and other citizens in the watershed and beyond.

### **Bayou Bartholomew Alliance Board Meeting**

**March 4, 2004**

**6:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.**

**Monticello, Arkansas**

**Arkansas Game and Fish Commission Building**

**Public is Invited!!!!!!**

**FOR MORE INFORMATION**

**You can contact the Bayou Bartholomew Alliance by writing, calling, or e-mailing:**

Dr. Curtis Merrell, President  
P.O. Box 665  
Monticello, AR 71657  
870/367-5901 home  
870/367-7427 fax  
cmerrell@sark.net

#### **Board Members**

John Scott McClendon, VP	Dr. Robert Butler
Jack Edwards	Elton Kennedy
Robert Mitchell	
George Pugh	

Dr. Bill Layher, Coordinator  
Layher BioLogics RTEC, Inc.  
7233 Camden Cutoff Rd.  
Pine Bluff, AR 71603  
870/879-4808 office/fax  
layher@earthlink.net

The Bayou Bartholomew Alliance is presented with a new barge to assist in removing logjams from the Bayou. President of SEAARK Marine, John McClendon right visits with Dr. Layher, Dr. Robert Butler, Robert Mitchell, and BBA President, Dr. Curtis Merrell at a ceremony held at the Delta Rivers Nature Center in Pine Bluff on Nov., 6, 2003. (Photo by Kim Ruff)



**YES, I WANT TO HELP!**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

**CHECK ONE**

Enclosed is a donation to help fund: (donations are tax deductible)

- the nature trail
- tree seedlings
- general operations
- newsletter mailing and printing

I would like to volunteer to:

- help with cleanups
- help remove logjams
- Adopt a trail segment (be sure to include the name of your group such as a boy scout troop, 4-H Club, Rotary Club, etc.)

**Mail to**

Bayou Bartholomew Alliance  
7233 Camden Cutoff Rd.  
Pine Bluff, AR 71603



**Mist rises over the Bayou Bartholomew in Drew County on a cool fall morning.**

### **LOGJAM REMOVAL VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!**

As noted earlier in this newsletter, SEAARK Marine, Inc. of Monticello, AR donated a work barge to the Bayou Bartholomew Alliance. This barge has two electric winches fore and aft. By using volunteers, the BBA can now start opening logjams in the bayou to facilitate the movement of small boats or canoes down the bayou. Two summers ago, volunteers removed a total of 36 logjams. We hope to far exceed that total this year.

**Beginning about April 1, 2004, we will dedicate an average of two days per week to such efforts. If you would like to volunteer to help us in these activities, feel free to give the BBA coordinator a call or send an e-mail (see page 3 for contact information). We anticipate doing this work on Wednesdays and Thursdays as well as some Saturdays if we can find the help. It is hard work, but quite rewarding.**

If you have certain days or times that you can volunteer or if you want to be put on a contact list, please let us know. We believe there are still nearly 200 such logjams to work on. We do not remove logs from the bayou. We sometimes use them for bank stabilization efforts or pull them to side channels where they are out of the immediate channel. Logjams provide fish habitat and are important to the bayou ecology, so we do not often move entire jams, just open a corridor to improve passage and prevent flows from eroding banks. Your help will be greatly appreciated!!!!!!!

## **BBA Website**

The BBA has a website!

Visit the website at [www.accessarkansas.org/bba/](http://www.accessarkansas.org/bba/)

Maps, pictures, teaching modules for science classes, past newsletters, and upcoming events are all posted. We hope to expand the materials at the site. Please let us know your thoughts and ideas. Drop in! We'd love to hear from you.

**If you have old photos or stories about the bayou, send them to us and we will try to put them in our newsletter. We can return photos.**



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