

LSU Coastal Roots Program Tree Planting on Bayou Teche Refuge

November 19, 2009

Mrs. Lynn Landry, Environmental Science Teacher of Franklin Senior High School and 28 of her students saw the end result of their project as they planted trees on the Bayou Teche Refuge. During the project, the students grew over 900 trees, of which 455 were planted on the refuge. The remaining 488 trees were donated to other schools to complete their projects. Trees grown by the Franklin High School students were cared for by the students under the guidance of Mr. Pete Boudreaux, Ag Science Teacher at the school.

The students arrived at the refuge with Coach Steven Carlson, a supporter of the project and the bus driver. Refuge Manager, Paul Yakupzack led the group to the site which he had prepared earlier to make it easier to plant the trees. He gave expert advice as to how the refuge would benefit from the trees and was there to answer questions from participants and the news media. Dr. Pam



Blanchard, PhD, instructed students on the proper planting procedures for the trees. She taught them about depth, distance, placement and marking.

To document the event, several news media were in attendance including Roger Stouff of the Franklin Banner Tribune; Holly Leleux-Thurbon of the Daily Iberian and Mrs. Marguerite Robinson of the cable television news show, Teche Talk.

The LSU Coastal Roots Program at Franklin High School was made possible by a grant from Wal Mart Foundation written by The Friends of Bayou Teche Refuge. The funds were awarded to the group by manager and employees of the Franklin Wal Mart. The Friends of Bayou Teche applied it to the LSU Coastal Roots Program at Franklin High School.

Dr Pam Blanchard stated that the Coastal Roots Program began in 2000 with six schools. As of November 2009, 38 schools were in the program. Franklin High School is the first school in St. Mary Parish to be including in the program. Dr. Blanchard commented that Franklin Senior High had exceeded all other first year schools in the program. Normally a first year school will produce about 300 trees. Franklin Senior High school produced over 900 trees to plant. Most of the trees were planted to restore the habitat that was used for oil field production near the Centerville unit of the Bayou Teche Refuge.

There are several types of trees produced by the LSU Coastal Roots Program as well as marsh grass and mangrove. The type of plants selected is dependent on the area that they will be planted in. All plants are native to the environment.