



VOLUME 24, NUMBER 5

MAY 2012

PRESIDENT'S REPORT



Please go directly to the BBEEC Steering Committee report of April 12, 2012 in this newsletter. The Groups working under the Steering Committee have developed great plans for steps we can take now with additional programs for our visitors, studies about the area around the Park, and prep work for fund raising when TPWD gives us permission to make the BBEEC happen. If you are not yet working with

one or more of the Groups, now is the time to join the fun.

The Gift Shop Committee has done a wonderful job of revamping the Gift Shop. It has a more open look and much better features to display products. They also came in under budget. The Maintenance Group was a part of the project. Thanks to all for your effort.

Several months ago we gave a grant to Cord Eversole who is doing research on alligators at BBSP. He has been in the park counting, tagging and measuring alligators during the second week of April. A number of our members have assisted Cord with this effort. We received a thank you letter from the Caesar Kleberg Wildlife Research institute at Texas A&M University–Kingsville for our support of the research. It would be good to read in our next newsletter a volunteer's account of a night assisting Cord.

In this issue:

President's Report 1
BBEEC Steering Committee 2
April Meeting Notes 3
Staff Reports 5
Congratulations 7
Welcome to the Dements 7
Kudos to BBSP 8
Outreach Report 8
Blowndown Tree 9
Eagle Sighting 9
A Bird Hunting 10
Stress Relieving Tips for VITs11
Waiting for Mom 12
Eagle Swimming 12
Upcoming Events 13

We need your input at our monthly meeting on May 12 at 5:30 PM, and every second Saturday of the month. Look forward to seeing you there.

Offie Walker

BBEEC STEERING COMMITTEE

April 12, 2012 Summary of current activities

- 1. **BBEEC Design:** The building task force is actively engaged with the TPWD architect on design. The drawings have now been through two iterations, and we expect another meeting in April.
- 2. **Visitor Experience:** The work group is assessing current exhibits and developing specifications for the new EEC.
- Education: The work group is considering possible future research projects which might include collaboration with schools and universities. They are also investigating possible funding options for these projects.

4. Conservation:

- Research on land ownership bordering the park is on-going.
- The work group is researching the potential for an on-going bird population study, with possible emphasis on migratory birds.
- The work group is investigating how to tabulate all the research projects that have been done at BBSP and make that information available on the website.
- The work group is investigating the potential for a bird sighting reporting system for use by park visitors .
- The Volunteer Organization has sponsored a study of the alligator population that is ongoing.

5. Partnership:

- Financial supporter (friends) group: A proposal has been drafted for a potential large corporate sponsor, and is awaiting TPWD approval.
- The work group is continuing to gather data on large potential corporate and individual donors for the EEC.
- Work is proceeding on development of marketing and communication materials.
- The strategy presentation used with the membership is being reworked for use with TPWD staffers at different areas of the department, and will be completed by April 30.
- Letters of introduction/interest are being prepared for the Hands-on Science Partnership and the S.T.E.M. Coalition (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics) to investigate whether our active participation might be beneficial to the park. Target date is April 30.

Prepared by: Dave Armstrong Mike Manley Hannah Meddaugh

APRIL MEETING NOTES

Offie Walker called the general meeting to order on April 14, 2012. There were 15 members, 3 staff and 1 guest present. The minutes were approved as posted.

Thanks to Lindsay Kahn for cornbread chili bake, Jaci Elliott for fruit salad, and Cindy Peterson for dessert.

Staff reports were brought and are reported elsewhere in the newsletter.

TREASURER'S REPORT: Bob Kowalewski.

March matched what we had in January and February combined for income. We had lots of visitors and good sales in the Gift Shop.

The following requests for purchase were approved by the Budget Committee and submitted for membership approval. They were all approved as submitted.

Ron Morrison: Armstrong medium duty disc system to repair feral hog damage to grassy area. It attaches to the mower and will make it easier to smooth out dirt when the hogs dig it up. Funds will come from the Morrison/El Paso fund.

Steve Killian: Repair the grasshopper mower, which is used for grounds maintenance. Funds will come from the Equipment Maintenance and Repair fund.

David: Two Stalker dual SL KA band traffic radar units, for both police vehicles. These are DPS turn-ins that have been reconditioned and tested by the Texas Facilities Commission. Our current unit is not working, and two units will allow both police officers to monitor traffic, whether they are moving or stationary.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Diane Carpenter reported on the Gift Shop for Beth Debenport: We had good sales in March. It took the effort of everybody on the committee to keep the GS stocked with inventory. Beth and Diane will begone next weekend, and Anna Dell will out after that. Thanks for all the help. Over Spring Break, it was very noticeable how much not taking credit cards is hurting sales, so we're investigating a new software package for the GS. We will meet with UH Small Business Development Group for free advice on retail sales software and credit card software. Diane will head the group to get new software and bring back a report.

We had a request from former volunteer Fletcher Morgan's daughter for a letter of recommendation to Lamar Consolidates IDS regarding a school to be named for Fletcher in the District. Sharon responded to the request immediately.

Judy Strauss reported on Outreach. Two events in March were the Brazoria Heritage Day and the Children's Festival at the Ft Bend Museum on March 4, Jerry Carpenter and Woody Scott helped Judy with this event. Attendance at some events is going down. In April we have an outreach at Sienna Library coming up. Judy and Woody will be there April 21, 11-2, to talk about the park, trails, and what the park offers, and will take some critters. There will be two 30-minute programs.

Sweeny Pride Day is May 5. We had over 1000 visitors at our booth last year. We will need more volunteers for this event, to help make it easier for everyone. Volunteers can sign up on the special events calendar.

Judy also asked us to consider whether we want to continue having the meeting night dinner. It's hard to get people to sign up in advance so we know what to expect. We recently split up the meal, asking three different people to bring one dish each. We need to decide if we should continue or not. The May meeting is covered, but we may have to go back to bringing our own bag suppers. If we continue, we will need more help. Waiting until the last minute to sign up makes it hard on planners.

Anna Dell Williamson reported she will be out of town for 3 weeks and the May newsletter will be shorter than normal. Some articles, like the NC and maintenance reports, aren't written until after the first of the month, and those will be doubled up in the June newsletter.

We received a letter from the Texas A&M at Kingsville, Caesar Kleberg Wildlife Institute, thanking BBSPVO for support for Cord Eversol's alligator study.

Dave Armstrong send a report on the Steering Committee for BBEEC, which Offie read to the membership. It is summarized in a separate article in the newsletter.

Offie reminded us that the August meeting will be at 2:30 in the Dining Hall with dessert served before the meeting. The Budget and Executive meetings will start at 12:00.

Offie reminded members to sign the attendance sheet for meetings. He stressed attendance at regular meetings and invited all members to attend budget and executive meetings to find out more about the activities of the organization. All agenda items have to be cleared by the Executive committee before the general meeting.

Maintenance report by Woody Scott. The crew has been spending lots of time in the woodyard, putting out wood for campers. They have also been running feral hog traps during the week, and took 8 hogs. Treating for fire ants has been a major activity also.

Guest: Jaci Elliott introduced her husband, Doug Elliott.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Ethan Hoover placed 3rd place in UIL District competition and will go to Regional Competition next weekend for accounting. He also has his driving permit. Congratulations, Ethan.

Judy Strauss reported that she took her first ever cruise with Woody, which included rock climbing, rope climbing, snorkeling, Mayan ruins, and karaoke. It was fantastic.

The meeting was adjourned.

STAFF REPORTS



PARK SUPERINTENDENT STEVE KILLIAN

We just experienced a record-breaking March - the <u>best month ever</u>. Thanks for the help to make it what it was. Last Saturday, April 7, was the all time record day to date. It held that record for 24 hours, and then Easter Sunday was the absolute best day ever. Friday through Sunday, we had over 25,000 visitors, with no park closing on Easter. There were three entry lines processing admissions as fast as possible, and the line was backed up to Jacob's driveway. Park staff would not have been able to handle that with the

volunteers and park hosts.

March was also the best Gift Shop month in Headquarters. The Gift Shop has added coffee, new t-shirts, and started selling fish bait today.

We have had quite a bit of promotional coverage recently through Fox 26 and Channel 2 news. There was an alligator issue at a nearby school, and BBSP staff talked about alligator etiquette in regards to this issue.

We have had a Texas Department of Criminal Justice crew (trustees with guards) weed-eating all the trails and campgrounds. The work was accomplished in two weeks.

Staff has completed water level management at Elm and 40-Acre Lakes. The lakes have been filled to improve habitat for wildlife, and to give a more pleasing view for the public. This couldn't be done without volunteer help. Creekfield needs to have water added more often to maintain a good level.

Staff has completed the yearly treatment of exotic lake vegetation. We treated 40-Acre Lake to kill bluetail and give more open water.

BBSP has received some awards recently:

Americorps crew will be here mid-June through mid-July, developing Creekwood trail.

David got a trails grant \$70,000.

BBSP was recognized by Austin as the perfect place for TPWD to hold its annual tourism media event, to be held Monday, May 7. We will need two vounteer helpers. The TPWD focus is on taking your mother out to a state park for Mother's Day. The Texas Beef council will be involved, and the head chef will create a beef and cheese picnic meal.

BBSP has been evaluated by the Texas State Office of Risk Management (SOR) involved in Workers' Comp issues. The report was received Mon, and we passed with high rating. Everything is in place; MSDS sheets, ATV's with seat belts, chemicals properly stored, safety equipment used. Be sure to continue to wear safety equipment, use seat belts, and not carry anyone in back of an ATV. There was a comment that the position of the warning triangle in the back blocks the view when backing - will see what can be done about moving them to a better place on the vehicle.



SHARON HANZIK INTERPRETIVE RANGER AND VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR

We have started taking donations for printing costs for Geocaching lists, and Orienteering instructions for the Nature Center and Hale Lake. When visitors ask for the forms at the desk, send them to the Gift Shop. All donations will be put in the same box as for the Outdoor Guide and will be used to cover printing costs, such

as ink cartridges and paper. They will also be available free for visitors to print out from our web site. We will continue to give out Junior Naturalist Patch worksheets at the Nature Center desk, because they pay for the patches when they earn them. This covers the cost of the patches and worksheets.

Please help us get the word out for volunteer recruiting. Take BBSPVO brochures and distribute them in appropriate places. The deadline is the end of June.

We need school Group help. On May 7, we have a homeschool group coming, and will need help for a Creekfield hike at 9:30.

At least half of the February VITs have moved on to Phase 2.

We discussed the Sienna Plantation alligator sightings. Residents can get alligator information on our web site and put it out on the trails, waterways, golf course, etc.

Thanks for filling the need.



DAVID HEINICKE INTERPRETIVE RANGER AND LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICER

The population of BBSP increased by one on April 10, with the birth of Rylie Ann Dement. (She was welcomed by those present with a round of applause.) She is the second baby born to a park resident in the history of BBSP.

We received a trail grant which will be used mostly for gravel to resurface trails and a composting toilet at the Equestrian area. Those assisting will be volunteers, Parks and Wildlife trail crew, Americorps, and the Criminal Justice crew.

We are looking for some way to repair the Creekfield asphalt on the north side of the trail.

We have been approved to fill in the last section of Live Oak Trail with a four-foot wide elevated gravel path.

This will be done as soon as the trail dries out.

Fawns are being born at this time. Three have been found in the Nature Center grass. Fawns know to lay in grass until their mother comes back. They aren't abandoned, and they have no body scents, so predators don't smell them. Keep at least 15-20 feet away for photos. If fireants are around the fawn, contact Sharon or David.

Last month over 11,000 visitors came through the Nature Center, but that was not the record for March. We had over 1200 visitors last Sat, and 750 today.

Americorps volunteers will look into completing the Creekwood trails.

Thanks for all help.

CONGRATULATIONS



MAY BIRTHDAYS

Suzie Gann
Virginia Harrison
Ethan Hoover
Kathleen Hosek
JT Kalina (Staff)
Dennis Keprta (Emeritus)
Mikki Kilgore
Carrie Sample
Dawn Tejero



MAY ANNIVERSARIES

Jo Ann and Chuck Davis Linda and David Heinicke Patricia and Steve Marshall

JUNE BIRTHDAYS

Kent Fewell
Peter Guzman
Linda Keltner
Glen Kilgore
Michael Sanderson
Rebecca Sykes
Anna Dell Williamson

JUNE ANNIVERSARIES

Joe and Sue Carmichael (1953) (Emeritus) Linda & Don Keltner

WELCOME TO THE DEMENTS

Jacob Dement is our new Assistant Superintendent, and we all want to give him a hearty welcome. He is from Lake Texana State Park and began work March 1. April 10, his wife Angie gave birth to their second daughter, Rylie Ann, who is the second baby born to a park resident in the park's history. Jacob is also a law enforcement officer and an interpreter. A welcoming reception was held for him at the Killian's residence recently.



KUDOS TO BBSP

from Sharon Hanzik

The following is a letter to TPWD website in the Comment/Question area. I think that the volunteer mentioned is probably Cathy Nevotti and not "Carol".

Comment or Question:

I want to commend the staff of the Brazos Bend State Park. My husband and I took our four-year-old grandson for his first state park visit on Thursday, March 29th. It was an awesome experience. We had already made the decision to buy a state park pass before we came that day. But if we hadn't, the experience that we had would have convinced us to do so. The staff were all enthusiastic and professional and especially interactive and understanding with our grandson.

It is very rare these days to go to a place where our contact with every employee is positive, much less exceptional. That is what we encountered at Brazos Bend on Thursday. From the time we were greeted at the gate by a friendly, helpful staff member until we left, the staff went above and beyond to make our day special.

The process to purchase our pass was professional and efficient, with the staff member taking the time to explain everything and cheerfully answer all our questions. Carol made our visit to the Nature Center amazing. It meant so much that she spent extra time with our grandson and gave the presentation in a way that could be understood by a four year old. Not an easy undertaking.

Every part of the park we visited was impeccably maintained, even the restrooms were remarkably clean. This is the work of a team that evidently takes a tremendous amount of pride in what they do. In years past, I have visited the park with my husband and my (now grown) daughter, but it has been many years since my last visit. I am so glad we made the decision to introduce our grandson to the park. Thank you for all that you do to make such a beautiful place even more of a joy to visit.

Marcella Fleischmann

OUTREACH REPORT

Below is a letter regarding our Outreach Program at the Sienna Branch Library sent to Judy Strauss and Woody Scott.

On behalf of myself and Sienna Branch Library, I would like to thank you so very much for your wonderful presentation this past Saturday. You guys do such a great job. As you could tell, our library patrons loved the program. We really appreciated all your time and effort. It is so obvious that you guys love what you do. It comes through in your presentation. What a wonderful gift you both provide to the community. Your efforts were very much appreciated by all.

Thanks again,
Elizabeth Bullard
Librarian-Adult Services
Sienna Branch Library





BLOWNDOWN TREE

(Ed. Note: The full May Maintenance Report will be included in the June newsletter. But here's a brief report on one activity, sent by Ron Morrison.)

On the afternoon of April 13, I watched as Jeff Orsak moved the blowdown live oak tree that has been obstructing the Creekfield Forest trail. Richard Taylor resurfaced the trail to excellent shape. Kudos to the rangers for helping in this difficult issue.





EAGLE SIGHTING

by Anna Dell Williamson

As Bruce and I were coming to BBSP mid-morning April Saturday, we saw an eagle perched on a light pole along 1462, on the west side of the Brazos River. On the ground below the eagle was a large roadkill animal. I stopped the car as quickly as I could, and we both jumped out with our cameras. Bruce was able to get the following two pictures, one just before the eagle flew off to the west. The sun was behind the bird, so all we got were silhouettes, but getting to see the eagle at all was quite a thrill.

Later in April, we read in the Pearland newspaper that there is a pair of nesting eagles in our own town of Pearland, not far from an area of heavy traffic. Residents and law enforcement officers are trying to protect the birds from curious humans getting too close.

A BIRD HUNTING

by Rick Dashnau

April 15, 2012-- Today was a rather quiet day at the park, with the intermittent sun and blustery winds seeming to keep our animals subdued. However, there were a few interesting things to see in the morning before I came in to do the Creekfield Hike. After some time in the Nature Center, I decided to go out to look around again. About 3 o'clock, dark clouds off to the west made me hurriedly bike back towards my car. I was still near 40 Acre lake, when I saw a Black Crowned Night Heron atop a vertical piece of wood, close to the trail. I stopped to take a picture or two, and it didn't fly away.



Some of us have seen birds at the park fishing and hunting. Sometimes their hunting behavior is pretty amazing--enough so that when we describe it to park visitors, the visitors look at us like we are making it up. For instance--the Green Heron will sometimes use bait while fishing. That is, it will take something interesting (in my experience, an insect), and place it in the water. After this, it watches the insect as it drifts. If the insect drifts close, it will carefully pick up the insect, and place it further out. The heron is watching the insect, but also watching for any fish that come up to take the insect. When one does....FISH DINNER! I've got pictures and small video clips on my own page (http://www.rickubis.com/rick/brazbird1.html) showing a Green Heron using bait in this manner.

Some quick research will show that Black-Crowned Night Herons have also fished this way. But they also use a variation. Sometimes, if one is lucky, it is possible to see these Night Herons performing a very odd activity. They will very carefully dip just the tip of their open beak into the water and sort of "flutter" it. That is, they make tiny quick movements that bring the top and bottom towards each other. I've filmed them doing it before, and it was only after some conversations with folks like Bill, David, and Greg that I learned that the Black-Crowned Night Herons are also fishing; but they are using their beaks as lures!







Go ahead and laugh. It sounds incredible. My Sibley's Guide to Bird Life and Behavior doesn't mention this particular strategy, but there is some mention of it elsewhere on the internet. And then with that sparse reference...there is what I saw. After I took my few pictures, the Black Crowned Night Heron started fishing. And I started filming and caught something quite amazing. The images with this article are frame grabs from the video clip, which can be seen here: video clip (wmv 12mb). The Park Superintendent has identified the fish as a Warmouth Bass. Information on the bass can be found at the TPWD site here: http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us/huntwild/wild/species/war/

STRESS RELIEVING TIPS FOR VITS

Tortoise or the Hare? Suggestions for Procrastinators and Type A's

by Mike Sanderson

The first three days of classroom training are very structured. You may feel a little lost as you move on to the Phase 1 and 2 requirements since you will sort of be on your own to get those done as your time allows. In my experience and observation, it seems most of us race through the easy parts of Phase 1 and 2 and put off doing the Gotta' Have Gators presentation and the Creekfield Hike to the very last possible moment and that's OK. You should not feel pressured to finish faster than you are able or comfortable. But it will be a huge relief to you if you do it as soon as you feel comfortable and don't let it hang over your head for too long.

As you move through your Phase 1 and 2 requirements, don't forget that if you need an alligator program, bird hike, or other component to ask Sharon or David (in advance) to schedule it for you for the day you need to be at the park. If you give her enough time, she is almost always able to this for you.

When you're ready to do Gotta' Have Gators, let Sharon or David know at least a week in advance. They will usually only schedule one presentation a weekend day. Since most people wait until the very last minute to do their Creekfield Hike and Gotta' Have Gators presentation you could wind up bumped out of the dates and times you want by your class mates, especially if you had a large class and if everyone waits until the end. No worries though, it may only mean it could take longer to finish all your requirements than you anticipated.

Here's my last suggestion about scheduling your Phase 1 and Phase 2 components. I found it very useful to sit down and look at my personal calendar for the several months allowed for each phase and get my requirements scheduled on the BBSP Volunteer calendar (Type A project manager). This allowed me to complete the components I needed when I was able to be at the park and kept me from double booking other activities I might have had going on outside of the park. It also allowed me in some cases to get more than one activity done on days when I could be at the park longer. Several activities like the Water Station, Gift Shop, and Bird Hikes are space limited or scheduled on limited or specific dates and you may not be able to do them on the day you want if you wait to the last minute to schedule. Remember to have fun during your training and to make use of your mentors and other volunteers. We all were new once and we're here to help.

P.S. About the trail trimming component. If possible, I would try to get a group of your fellow VITs together and pick a mutually agreeable weekend to schedule a trail trimming event. Doing it this way made it a lot more fun for my VIT class and the two hours went by very quickly. If you're in a February class, I would highly recommend doing this before late spring when it starts to get hot and humid - if your progresses through your Phase 1 and Phase 2 requirements allow it.



WAITING FOR MOM



Good Friday, this young visitor was located in the grass near the Nature Center. Sharon roped off the area so visitors wouldn't disturb the baby, who waited patiently for the mother to come back. Finally the area got sunny and too warm, so he moved to a nearby shady spot to continue the wait.

A doe leaves her fawn, who has no odor to attract predators, in a safe place and returns to that place to get him later in the day. Disturbing a fawn by getting too close or picking it up leaves a human odor that may frighten the doe when she returns. The best action is to keep people away from a fawn, and if a visitor

comes up to you carrying one, instruct him to return the fawn to where he found it immediately.

Bruce Williamson got this photo with a zoom lens, and the fawn just happened to turn it's head on the last shot. Otherwise it was almost invisible in the grass.



EAGLE SWIMMING

(Ed. Note: I received this email from a friend and wanted to share it with you all. Click on the YouTube link.)

Ever See An Eagle Do The Breast Stroke?

This footage was taken at Mallard Lakes subdivision in Baton Rouge. Someone had shot a Nutria Rat, and it was floating dead in the water. I can't believe what this eagle did to bring that Nutria Rat in. I never saw an Eagle doing a breast-stroke before.

http://www.youtube.com/embed/87xNpOYOIQ4?rel=0

UPCOMING EVENTS

May 4 Bird hike, 8:00 AM, 40-Acre Lake restroom building May 12 BBEEC Partnership Task Force meeting, 1:00 PM, lounge (Nelda Gay) Budget and Executive Meetings, 3:00 PM Regular Business Meeting, 5:30 PM (Supper, 5:00 PM) May 13 Bird hike, 8:00 AM, 40-Acre Lake restroom building May 19 BBEEC Steering Committee Meeting, 1;00 PM (Dave Armstrong) June 9 Budget and Executive Meetings, 3:00 PM Regular Business Meeting, 5:30 PM (Supper, 5:00 PM) July 14 Budget and Executive Meetings, 3:00 PM Regular Business Meeting, 5:30 PM (Supper, 5:00 PM) August 11 Budget and Executive Meetings, 12:30 PM Regular Business Meeting, 2:30 PM (Desserts), Dining Hall September 8 Budget and Executive Meetings, 3:00 PM Regular Business Meeting, 5:30 PM (Supper, 5:00 P









Brazos Bend State Park

Texas Parks and Wildlife 21901 FM 762 Needville, TX 77461

NEXT MEETING SATURDAY, MAY 12, 2012 5:30 PM, NATURE CENTER



FIRST CLASS MAIL

REGULAR VOLUNTEER EVENTS

Creekfield Hikes

Photo Hikes Volunteer meeting

Bird Hikes

Every Saturday and Sunday at 10:00 AM, led by volunteers First Saturday of each month Second Saturday of each month at 5:30 PM, supper at 5:00 PM See schedule in calendar

BRAZOS BEND STATE PARK VOLUNTEER ORGANIZATION

VOLUNTEER ORGANIZATION OFFICERS

President: Offie Walker
Vice-President: Mary Lockwood
Secretary Belinda DiMarcello
Treasurer: Bob Kowalewski
Past-President: Carrie Sample
Comptroller: Rachelle Watson

NEWSLETTER TEAM

Editor Anna Dell Williamson
Layout Cynthia Morales
Production Assistant Bruce Williamson
Distribution Carol Ramsayer
Web Master Anne Shelton

The **Brazos Bend Bunch Bugle** is the newsletter of the Brazos Bend State Park Volunteer Organization, A.K.A. The Brazos Bend Bunch. It is distributed monthly to volunteers through the BBSPVO web site. For further information on this newsletter or the volunteer program, contact David Heinicke or Sharon Hanzik at Brazos Bend State Park, phone 979-553-5101.

Opinions expressed in this newsletter are the opinions of the author of the article and do not necessarily reflect the official position of Brazos Bend State Park Volunteer Organization nor of BBSP administration. The deadline for Newsletter contributions is the Saturday following the monthly meeting, if mailed to Anna Dell Williamson, or at the meeting if delivered to the park. (E-mail address: <a williamson 4 @ comcast.net> or <newsletter@brazosbend.org>). Notify Anna Dell (281-485-2843) well in advance of any events you want announced in the newsletter.

IN THE END, WE WILL CONSERVE ONLY WHAT WE LOVE, WE WILL LOVE ONLY WHAT WE UNDERSTAND, WE WILL UNDERSTAND ONLY WHAT WE ARE TAUGHT.

BABA DIOUM, SENEGAL AFRICAN CONSERVATIONIST