

## SEABROOK STUDENTS CRUISE THE BAY

(Photo attached)

May 13, 2002

Students from Seabrook Intermediate School recently carried their classroom onto Galveston Bay. Fifty-four students from three classes – Wonderful Wetlands, Grow Lab and Extreme Science – enjoyed a BaySmart cruise on Galveston Bay aboard the Smith Point, a 45' Coast Guard certified boat that serves as a floating classroom.

The three BaySmart cruises began at the Bayland Park Marina in Baytown and traversed the Upper Bay Area around Morgan's Point, Atkinson Island and Barber's Cut. Students were able to relate their on-the-water experience to courses they were taking in school. They learned about the important contribution Galveston Bay makes to the local and State economy. They also learned that Galveston Bay is a critical and fragile natural resource that must be protected and preserved for present and future generations.

Throughout the trips students observed various industrial activities around the Bay and many different types of boats including tugs, shrimp boats, fuel barges, dredges, recreational boats and tankers. With permission from the Coast Guard they were able to go into Barber's Cut and observe the loading and unloading of container ships from different countries. While observing boat traffic in the area, students learned that there are specific rules of the road and navigation aides that help to ensure safe boating.

Students participated in two experiments – water quality testing and trawling. The water quality test emphasized that some water pollutants can be seen with the naked eye while others are unseen. The trawling exercise gave students an opportunity to see a variety of sea-life and gain a better understanding of the critical aspects of food chains and life cycles of sea life.

During the cruise a certified facilitator taught the BaySmart curriculum that was developed in support of the student's school work. Teachers were provided with pre-cruise information that was used to prepare the students for what they would be experiencing. School subjects addressed during the trip included geography, chemistry, environmental issues, safe boating practices, economics, government regulations, history, meteorology, math, ecology and world trade. Students also observed and learned about various career opportunities that were directly and indirectly related to Galveston Bay. In addition to the academic aspects of the BaySmart curriculum, students learned the value of staying in school, getting a good education, preparing for a productive adulthood and remaining drug free. Follow-up evaluations indicated that the trips were entertaining, educational and relevant. Students returned to their classrooms with a better understanding of what they were studying and the relevancy of school work to the real world. Their teachers were impressed with the impact that BaySmart had on their students.

These three fieldtrips were provided by the BaySmart Program, a Division of Youth Educational Support Services (YESS). YESS is a 501-c-3 non-profit youth organization that operates in the greater Galveston Bay area. These three BaySmart trips were funded by Mr. Roy Cullen, Seabrook Rotary Club and Buffalo Marine Service. Frank Ooler, owner of Rum Runner Boat Charters, provided a power boat that was used to photographically record the fieldtrip activities. BaySmart youth activities are provided at no cost to students. Those interested in learning more about the BaySmart Program or becoming a partner of BaySmart can call Dr. Huey Barnett at 281-326-1464 or contacting him at [yess@quixnet.net](mailto:yess@quixnet.net).