



Ribbon-cutting ceremony opening the Visitors Pavilion at the National Butterfly Center. In the front row (left to right) are Julio Cerda, Mission City Manager; Javier Irueta (to the right and just behind Julio Cerda), CEO Mission Regional Medical Center; Jose Amador, co-chair National Butterfly Center Advisory Committee; Jeffrey Glassberg, president of NABA; Margaret McAllen, co-chair National Butterfly Center Advisory Committee, Kika de la Garza, former Congressman representing the Mission area; and Lucille de la Garza, member National Butterfly Center Advisory Committee.

A Big Day for Butterflies

Ribbon-cutting at the new Visitors Pavilion of the National Butterfly Center

by Jane Vicroy Scott



Above: People watching the people cutting the ribbon.

Sometimes, dreams do come true!

Everyone was excited. On October 28th, 2010, the ribbon-cutting ceremony opening the Visitors Pavilion at the National Butterfly Center marked the fulfillment of the second step of our long-held dream to create the premier center for education, conservation and research about wild butterflies.

The first step, taken in 2002-2003, was obtaining 100 acres of land on the Rio Grande and beginning to create gardens that would demonstrate the potential of the site to attract butterflies. These gardens have exceeded everyone's expectations, with clouds of butterflies filling the air at peak times and with more than 200 species of butterflies seen.

Since 2004, we slowly made progress toward the goal of constructing a Visitors

Pavilion that would house exhibits, offices, a gift shop and a cafe. We were almost there in 2008, but the national financial crisis hit us particularly hard when we lost more than \$850,000 in pledged funding.

Overleaf: A view of the newly constructed Visitors Pavilion. The reflecting pool contains a small fountain (not in operation when this photo was taken) and will include native water plants. The bare soil areas surrounding the building will be planted in the spring of 2011 with grasses native to the Lower Rio Grande Valley.