

Coastal Prairie Chapter Courier

August 2023 — Volume 11 Issue 8

"When the sun is shining I can do anything;
no mountain is too high, no trouble too
difficult to overcome."

Wilma Rudolph



Inside This Issue

Seabourne Cooks Up Some Good Projects

Moth Night

August Chapter Program: "Beneath the Buzz:

Exploring the Complex Role of Mosquitos"



We are a group of trained volunteers who share our appreciation and knowledge of nature with the community through outreach, education, and conservation/restoration projects.

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ON THE COVER

Niagara Perk Your Park Ribbon-Cutting at Seabourne Creek Park
(Photo by Jan Poscovsky)

EDITOR TEAM

—Cindy Wainikainen, August
Co-Editor, Cindy@CoastalPrairie.org

Have a great story for next month's issue? Submit by **AUGUST 25th**.

—Shannon Westveer, September Co-Editor, Shannon@CoastalPrairie.org

President's Message

by Terri Hurley, TMNCPC President



As we head into another exciting month for our chapter, I am reaching out to you with an earnest call for volunteers. The Texas Master Naturalist Coastal Prairie Chapter has thrived on the passion and dedication of individuals like you, and now, there are unique opportunities for you to contribute your skills to help further our chapter's goals.

Monthly Bird Hike Leader at Seabourne. Past leaders Bob and Carol Schwartz have decided to retire after years of capably leading our monthly hikes (Oct – May) and we now need someone to take over. Whether you're a seasoned birder or novice, leading these hikes is a rewarding way to connect with nature and inspire others to do the same. You don't have to be a birding expert to lead the hikes...just make sure that expert Mark Scheuerman can attend and he will be happy to do the identifying for us!



Courier Newsletter Co-Editor. Our chapter newsletter is an important medium for keeping our community informed and engaged. Talented co-editor, Cindy Wainikainen, has taken on a new job with the TPWD Small Game Program in Austin and will not be able to continue as co-editor as of the October issue. Do you have a way with words and a keen eye for detail? As *Courier* co-editor, you will collaborate with Shannon Westveer, our other co-editor, to produce our newsletter, alternating months. Your creativity and editing skills will play a vital role in continuing to make our newsletter an inspiring and informative read for everyone.



Communications Director. Megan Cromeens, our current Comms Director, has done a beautiful job this year, but she has also taken on a new job and will have to leave our chapter in a month or two. If you are passionate about effective communication and

spreading the conservation message of our chapter, this board-level role is for you. You will spearhead our publicity efforts, manage our social media platforms, and make monthly reports to the board meetings. You will work with a great team of volunteers who handle the newsletter, website and weekly bulletin. Your help in getting the

(Continued on page 4)

August Chapter Program: Thursday, August 3rd, 7 PM

“Beneath the Buzz: Exploring the Complex Role of Mosquitos”

By Jan Peterson, TMNCPC Programs Director



While it is undeniable that mosquitoes can be an annoyance and carry human diseases, the recurring question of whether eliminating them entirely would be beneficial warrants closer examination. Prompted by the frequency of this inquiry, our speaker will discuss the relationship between plant communities and wildlife as well as:

- An introduction to SE Texas wetlands
- The ecological role of mosquitoes especially in Texas' coastal wetlands
- Harmful effects of mosquito control in TX coastal marshes
- Why all mosquitoes aren't equally harmful
- History of mosquito borne disease and eradication in the southern U.S.
- What we can do to reduce populations of harmful mosquitoes and live with the others.

Andrew Sipocz
Texas Parks and
Wildlife Department
Natural Resource
Coordinator Region 4,
State Parks Division

Andrew received a Bachelor of Forestry with an emphasis on studies of wildlife management in 1985 from Purdue University in West Lafayette Indiana, and a Master of Science studying wetland ecology from Texas A&M University, College Station, TX in 1993.

Mr. Sipocz has been employed by the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) since 1990 predicting the effect of development projects on fish and wildlife habitat, conducting studies on coastal ecology, restoring native landscapes to



Photo source: TMNCPC [website](#)

southeast Texas state parks, and participating in TPWD's prescribed fire program.

His wife Wendy and their four children spend as much time outdoors as possible and especially enjoy canoeing through southeast Texas' exotic locales.

Coastal Prairie Chapter **programs are free** and open to the **public**. August's is being held at the **Bud O'Shieles Community Center** located 1402 Band Road, Rosenberg, Texas. Please plan to **arrive at 6:00 PM** for refreshments and social time; the **1-hour program begins at 7:00 PM**.

The [Texas Master Naturalist](#) program is sponsored by [Texas Parks and Wildlife Department](#) and [Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service](#).

[TMNCPC members in attendance should record their Advanced Training (AT) hours under "AT: Chapter Meeting-Coastal Prairie" and the VSP hours for the business meeting under "Chapter Business: Chapter Meeting."]

Membership Minute

By Jan and Kevin Kolk, TMNCPC Membership Co-Directors



Congratulations! to our numerous certification and milestone achievers. *Way to go!*

Initial Certification



Lorien Foux 2022 Fall

Alex Ciocca 2022 Fall

Cindy Starks 2023 Spring

1,000 Hour Milestone



Randolph Watson 2022 Fall



2023 Recertification (74 members recertified)

Rodney Walther 2023 Spring

Katie Sallean 2013

Shirley Hunter 2023 Spring

Jerry Trenta 2017

Lisa Sanders 2023 Spring

Bayard Nicklow 2022 Fall

Lucy Randel 2021 Spring



TMN Coastal Prairie Chapter by the numbers

Try matching our “to date” 2023 numbers with their category.

- | | |
|--------------------|-----------|
| 1. Member total | a. 2,410 |
| 2. VSP hours | b. 222 |
| 3. AT hours | c. 13,657 |
| 4. Outreach impact | d. 14,064 |

Answers can be found at the bottom of the page

(Continued from page 2)

President's Message cont'd

by Terri Hurley, TMNCPC President



word out about our activities will help us connect with more individuals and organizations.

By volunteering for any of these positions, you will not only contribute to the growth and impact of our chapter but also form lasting connections with fellow nature enthusiasts who share your desire to preserve Texas native resources.

If you would like to step up and make a difference, please reach out to me via email or cell to learn more about each role's responsibilities. Thank you for volunteering to help ensure the continued success of the Coastal Prairie Chapter.

Note from the Co-Editor:

Just wanted to say thank you! It has been wonderful to be a part of the *Courier* team. I will miss TMNCPC and all of its members. Thank you for all of your support!

- Cindy Wainikainen



Answers: 1. b 2. d 3. a 4. c

Volunteer Service — August Highlights

By Johanna DeYoung, TMNCPC Volunteer Director



Signature Project. Seabourne Creek Nature Park

(SCNP), Rosenberg: 8:00 AM – 10:00 AM
Wednesdays and 1st and 3rd Saturdays
which fall on 8/2, 8/5, 8/9, 8/16, 8/19,
8/23, 8/30

Ongoing Project. Houston Museum of Natural
Science in Sugar Land: 10:30 AM — 3:00
PM 2nd and 4th Saturdays which fall on
8/12 and 8/26

Ongoing Project. Coastal Prairie Conservancy
Indiangrass Preserve, Katy: 9:00 AM – 1:00
PM Tuesdays, Fridays, and 2nd Saturday of
each month which fall on 8/1, 8/4, 8/8,
8/11, 8/12, 8/15, 8/18, 8/22, 8/25, 8/29

Ongoing Project. Houston Audubon's Bird Survey @
Archbishop Joseph A. Fiorenza Park,
Houston: 7:30 AM – 12:00 PM 4th Monday
which falls on 8/28

Ongoing Project. Lawther-Deer Park Prairie, Deer
Park: 9:00 AM – 12:00 PM 4th Saturday of
each month which falls on 8/26

Ongoing Project. Insect Hike at Seabourne Creek
Nature Park: 4th Thursday of the Month
which falls on 8/24



****New & Notable this Month****

Fall Training Class Begins: 8/19

Nature Walk at Seabourne Creek Nature Park: 8/12,
7:30 AM – 8:30 AM

****UPCOMING****

Texas Master Naturalist 2023 Annual Meeting in
McAllen: Thursday, October 12th—Sunday,
October 15th. [Early Registration](#) is OPEN!

AUGUST 2023

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

Be sure to check our [website calendar](#) for last-minute
changes, cancelations, or other information before
departing to serve.

As you become aware of new volunteer opportunities,
have questions, or are unsure how to record service
hours, please message **#help-vsp** channel or
@Johanna on Slack or [email](#).

THANK YOU to the VSP Committee members Joanie
Havlick, Terri Hurley, Charris Powers, Shannon
Westveer, and Lynn Trenta.

JOIN US!

The public is always welcome to
serve alongside us in our
communities. Get out and meet
TMNCPC members in the field!

Seabourne Cooks Up Some Good Projects

By Lynn Trenta, TMNCPC Seabourne Gardens



As the excessive heat is still in place, we commend the intrepid Seabourne workers for showing up to volunteer at Seabourne Creek Nature Park! Many thanks to everyone who has put in time this summer.



Scout Troop 106. Photo by Lynn Trenta
Walker Wharton, Eagle Scout Candidate from the Fulshear Troop 106, began his roosting rack project, located on the island in the Seabourne Wetlands on July 22. Chapter Eagle Scout Director, Greg Hurley, Seabourne Directors Randolph Watson and Jerry Trenta, and valued chapter member Shree Nath prepared the site for the Eagle Scout Project on July 1. Due to the extreme heat, completion of the project will be continued on July 30.

On July 9, as part of our chapter's monthly nature walks, TMN Tierra Ortiz-Rodriguez led a mindful nature walk for 18 people at

Seabourne Creek Nature Park. Tierra states that these walks are not interpretation walks but a "Mindful Outdoor Experience" or MOE for short. Mindful movements, mindful breathing, sensory awareness and nature

meditation are experienced in an MOE lasting 1.5 hours.

The next monthly nature walk will be on Saturday, August 12 at 7:30am, location to be determined. If you want to try a Mindful Outdoor Experience, Tierra will be leading again on

Friday, September 8 at 8am at Cullinan Park. Come check out these alternative nature experiences!

On the 4th of July, our chapter was at Seabourne to help Rosenberg celebrate the holiday in spades! Check out Johanna De Young's article about this fun day on [page 12](#).



TMNCPC Members Paul, Alex and Lynn Trenta.
Photo by Shree Nath



Mindfulness Group. Photo by Jan Poscovsky

Seed collection has been taking place in the gardens at Seabourne. Several plants have been providing us with seeds for packaging or dispersing. Rosinweed, basketflower and others are producing a good crop of seeds that we can both put in envelopes and spread in the prairie.

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Seabourne Cooks Up Some Good Projects ... cont'd

By Lynn Trenta, TMNCPC Seabourne Gardens



(Continued from page 6)

As always, we have several ongoing projects at Seabourne, one of which is the prairie project. Because of the removal of the shrubby baccharis and huisache in Sections A and D of the prairie, we were able to mow in that area. This method is one of the ways to combat invasive plants and was recently suggested by Don Verser, a long-time prairie advisor at a Houston Native Prairie Association, in a recent program. Many thanks to the invasive plant team: Randolph Watson, Shree Nath, Fran Wilcox, Janis Hodgson, Johanna De Young, and others.



Mowed Prairie. Photo by Lynn Trenta

The monthly insect hike was at the Seabourne Wetlands this month. Chapter members found several species of insects and put them in petri dishes or a container of water to observe and photograph. Participants in the morning event were leader and chapter AgriLife advisor, John Few, Shannon Westveer, Kerry Padilla, Susie Doe, Margo Johnson, Ute Welk, Hoiman Low, Lynn Trenta, and new class member Sari Garfinkle. It was a fun morning and we learned about the insects, their

ecosystems and how to take better photographs with our cell phones as well.

John Rippert, the son of Honorary Chapter Member Linda Rippert, has been snapping photos at Seabourne for many years. We enjoy their visits to Seabourne and appreciate his photos taken at the park.

Next week at Seabourne Creek Nature Park is 'Rosie' week. Volunteers will receive a free 'Rosie' t-shirt when you volunteer on either Wednesday, 8/2 or Saturday, 8/5. There will be plenty of tasks to be worked on and hopefully, the start of planting natives from our nursery into the designated wetlands South Shore area near the viewing platform. We will be starting at 7:30am and be done no later than 10am. (Limit 1 per volunteer) We hope to see you there!



Insect Hike Group.

Photo by Shannon Westveer



Eastern Amberwing. Photo by John Rippert

Moth Night

By Shannon Westveer, TMNCPC Courier Co-Editor



Around Memorial Day, a few Texas Master Naturalists from several chapters wondered if it was possible to schedule back-to-back Saturday “Moth Nights” in the Houston area for five weekends in July. National Moth Week is officially July 22-29, 2023, but the entire month is used to bring awareness and count diversity of these mostly nighttime Lepidoptera species. We knew it would be worthwhile for science; it could also be something for people of all ages and skill levels to enjoy.

It is often said in the entomology circles that butterflies are the gateway to a love for insects. Because people are diurnal like the day-flying butterflies, they are sometimes shocked to learn that butterfly’s nighttime cousins – moths – outnumber them nearly



Chapter Advisor John Few (holding light). Photo by Jan Poscovsky

10 to 1. The best biodiversity and beauty of the scaled-wing creatures is certainly at night.

Getting a community to value wildlife with their own eyes is the very mission of TMN education and outreach. Blacklight stations act as lures for insects, a fun and safe manner for kids and their parents and grandparents to connect with the harmless, beautiful, scaled-winged

creatures, many of them smaller than a grain of rice.

We use our tools, of course: cameras and mobile phones equipped with magnification loupes and ring lights. A collective experience with wildlife in the field paired with iNaturalist’s A.I. assistance in identification, and an online community of passionate amateurs – and some professionals – help

observations get to what is called “Research Grade.” The greatest service a TMN can do is help a community of people get comfortable around insects, use the same tools we do, with similar set-ups in their own backyards with their kids. It may be science, but it’s also summer fun!

TMN members coordinated several “mothing bioblitz” events for July: 7/1 at Exploration Green in Clear Lake, 7/8 at Russ Pitman in Bellaire, 7/22 at Deer Park Prairie in Deer Park, and 7/29 at Trinity NWR in Liberty. One open weekend remained.

TMNCPC conservation partner City of Sugar Land was approached. Memorial Park’s Butterfly Garden was the perfect place with adequate parking, trails, native plantings, and fringe habitat for insect diversity. Sugar Land Parks and Recreation

(Continued on page 9)



Photo by Hoiman Low

Moth Night

By Shannon Westveer, TMNCPC Courier Co-Editor



(Continued from page 8)

Assistant Director, Fenglin Du, was asked if COSL might allow TMNCPC to set up blacklight stations after dark on the open Saturday, 7/15. It didn't take long for her to realize what a great outreach event this would be for nearby Sugar Land residents. In a matter of days, the flyer was published, and the date was set!

On July 15, several TMNCPC volunteers arrived at outreach tables featuring local nighttime wildlife. Workshops on Wheels (WOWs) are just what is needed to welcome the public, entire families heavy on adults with curious kids leading the way. Class of Spring 2023 members Cindy Starks and Becky Richards manned the Bat WOW while Jan and Stan Poscovsky manned the

Skins and Skulls WOW. Kids received some trinkets to use (LED keychain flashlights and a 2X magnifying bug jar) at the blacklight stations, the main event.

TMNCPC members Savitha Rao and Susan Walther used what remained of the daylight to answer questions and help people to understand what we were doing at the blacklight stations and why insect wildlife is important to the urban ecosystem. As the sun set around 9 PM, the fun began and children set out catching critters in their jars to take to the ID table.

"Is this a moth?" TMNCPC member Pelin Ünal's child, Yusuf, asked holding his fourth insect for ID. Yes! In fact, it was the first one for the night. Beetles are usually the first to show to the blacklight sheets, followed by the moths. By the time stations were broken down around midnight, the bioblitz team had logged more than 30 species of moths into iNaturalist along with dozens more species. The abundance of children – more than 50 in attendance – all exuberantly helped in the effort.

For full results, please see TMNCPC blog post [Citizen Science: Celebrate Moths, Bring Back the Night](#) where iNaturalist Lepidoptera are conveniently



Mary Spolyar, TMNGCC.
Photo by Tina Kung

sorted and linked for each Saturday event, listed at the end.

Thank you to the many volunteers who made the event possible, including TMNCPC member's Kerry Padilla, Hoiman Low, and Ute Welk and out-of-town iNaturalist member Derek Hudgins for his amazing insect photographs. TMN Gulf Coast "Moth Team" Mary Spolyar, Brian Shrock, and Rich Sommer brought their blacklight stations and sense of wonder to maximize diversity and wow the public. Thank you, Sugar Land Parks and Recreation, for the opportunity to engage people and wildlife at Memorial Park. We are greatly looking forward to being joyfully smothered by insects and children again next year!



Shannon Westveer (right).
Photo by Tina Kung

Niagara Perk Your Park Ribbon-Cutting

By Lynn and Jerry Trenta, TMNCPC Members

On the morning of July 26, the Niagara project team celebrated the official opening of the Niagara Perk Your Park Project with a ribbon-cutting ceremony. Kevin Raines, the mayor of Rosenberg, praised everyone's effort, including our chapter, whose hard work on the project has been phenomenal. The Niagara volunteers and city officials were there, along with our chapter's leaders, Seabourne Co-Director Jerry Trenta, and Chapter President Terri Hurley. Our chapter had a great turnout as well, mostly wearing our green logo shirts.



Photo by Jan Poscovsky

Seabourne Co-Director Jerry Trenta. Chapter President Terri Hurley submitted the grant request into the nationwide Niagara Perk Your Park

competition for the city of Rosenberg, resulting in the city of Rosenberg's Arboretum / Picnic Area Project being selected as one of the ten semi-finalists.



Photo by Rodney Walther

This arboretum project began with a grant written by our chapter grant team of Cindy Wainikainen, Keith Winfree, and John Shepherd, with help from

The final competition for the grant involved procuring community votes for the project and our chapter led the creation of the extensive marketing plan for getting out the vote. We got votes from both the city and our

chapter, as well as the Master Gardeners, all the other TMN Chapters and some other states' MN chapters as well. As a result, the City of Rosenberg was awarded one of the 3 \$75,000 grants available.

43 new 100-gallon trees were planted by the Parks and Recreation Department

and about 80 smaller trees were planted by volunteers from the Niagara Bottling Company, Fisher Scientific, and our chapter. Our chapter manually watered the trees until an irrigation system for the area was installed. The Parks and Recreation Department dug the trenches for the irrigation and the system, designed by Seabourne Co-Director Jerry Trenta, was installed by our volunteers. Parks and Recreation personnel and Niagara volunteers installed the picnic tables.

Our chapter can be proud of our part in establishing this arboretum and picnic area. We will continue to adjust the water to the trees as needed and monitor the health of the trees. The Seabourne signage committee is developing tree description signs that will soon be scattered throughout the area.

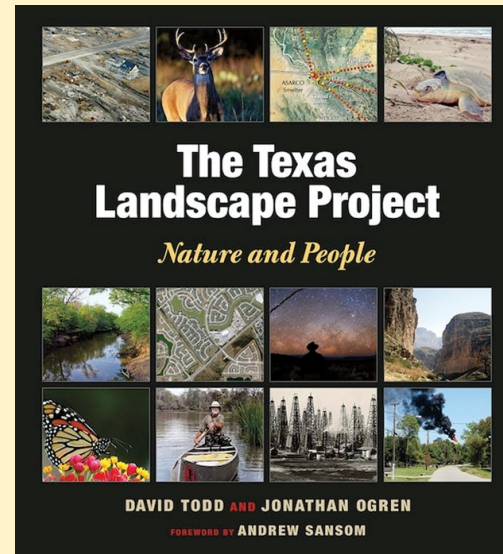
Book Review

By Bob Naeger, TMNCPC Member

The Texas Landscape Project by David Todd and Jonathan Ogren

The Texas Landscape Project describes the post-settlement changes that have occurred in the landscape and environment in Texas using over 300 maps. The topics covered are organized in the major topics of Land, Water, Air, Energy, and the Built World. In each of these major sections the authors feature a particular animal species to highlight the issues presented. The topics are deeply researched but the presentation is mostly graphical, so it is a fast read. The references each group of maps is built on are listed with them instead of buried in the back of the book. If you like going down rabbit holes this arrangement helps with that.

The graphics quality of the maps throughout the book is excellent. The authors use maps in innovative ways to convey chronology as well as location information.



If you are interested in getting an overview of how settlement has changed Texas and a graphical presentation appeals to you, you'll enjoy this book.

A note on access: The Fort Bend

County library system doesn't own this book, but they were able to source it from the Victoria Public Library just a few days after I requested it. If you want to buy a copy it is available from Amazon or Texas A&M press.

Training Class Updates

By Lauren DeShazo, TMNCPC 2023 Fall New Class Director

A huge shout out to our Spring 2023 class on jumping into their class projects with both feet. Lisa Sanders is doing an amazing job pulling all things together while Kevin Peters is pushing forward with plant research, landscape design, and more. They had their big kick off meeting where Jim Butcher awarded Kevin Peters with the Blue Donut for all the hard work he's doing on this project. They're making sure to do due diligence to ensure the project succeeds and is there for posterity. With it being such a large and long running project we are going to have the Fall 2023

class join them. You can follow along and see project progress in



Photo by Lisa Sanders

Slack at #proj-snp-archway-grasses

Speaking of our Fall 2023 class, the semester will kick off on August 19th with an in-person class at AgriLife. I'm so excited for you guys to meet our new members. This is an amazing new group with lots of experience in native plants, birds, and more. I've really enjoyed getting to know them. They'll be a perfect addition to the project and our chapter. Several of them have already been to our chapter meetings and are acquainted with some of our members. I can't wait to see what they bring to the chapter.

City of Rosenberg Family 4th Event

By Johanna DeYoung, TMNCPC Volunteer Director



Once the rain stopped, this event went off without a hitch! Between the Wagon Masters, Jim Stepp, Susan Walther, Rodney Walther, Jan Poscovsky, and Mary Saville, and the WOW Presenters, Joanie Havlick, Lorie Foux, and Johanna DeYoung, we encountered 281 attendees. It was a beautiful night for family fun and firework colors! We presented our newest

Workshop On Wheels, the Native Plant WOW, at this event. Situated under the Pavillion and across from the face-painting area, we failed to attract multitudes of attendees.



Wagonmasters training. Photo by Jan Poscovsky



Photo by Johanna DeYoung

One of our after-action decisions is to present the Skulls and Skins WOW for the 2024 Family 4th Event. With the tactile aspects of this WOW, we may be competitive with

the face-painting area.

It was a terrific night connecting with the community we serve and with each other.

The attendees who live in the area and frequent Seabourne Creek Nature Park voiced their appreciation of the park and the service the TMNCPC has provided to make it beautiful!

Bright Spots

By Cindy Wainikainen, TMNCPC Courier Co-Editor



Jan Poscovsky demonstrating the Enviroscope WOW and emphasizing the effects of pollution on our watershed. 21 actively engaged students were present at the FBC Master Gardeners' Kids Camp on 7-17-23 at the Fairgrounds.



Photo by Trevino FB Master Gardeners

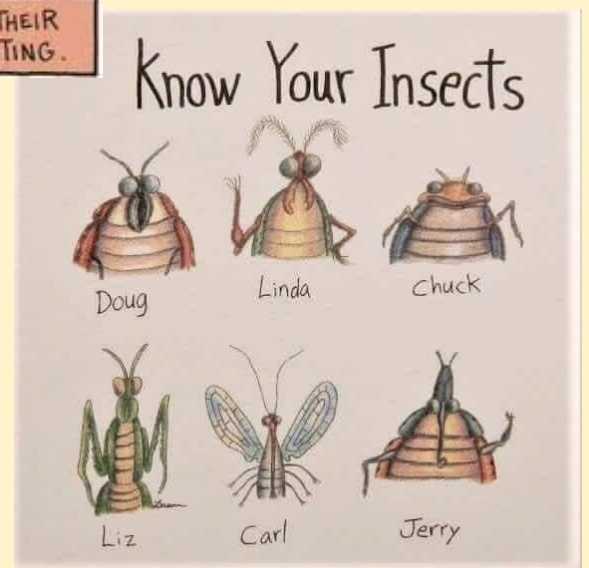
Kerry receiving a Blue Donut.



Photo by Johanna DeYoung

The Lighter Side

By Cindy Wainikainen, TMNCPC Courier Co-Editor



Source: Gary Larson, The Far Side

Elected Officers

President	Terri Hurley
Vice President	Susan Walther
Secretary	Joyce Tipton
Treasurer	Pam Jones

Board of Directors

Past-President	Bert Stipelcovich
Membership	Jan and Kevin Kolk
Programs	Jan Peterson
Communications	Megan Cromeens
Volunteers	Johanna DeYoung
Adv. Training	Kerry Padilla
New Class Spring	Lauren DeShazo
New Class Rep.	Lisa Sanders
Info. Tech.	Bert Stipelcovich
State Rep	Hoiman Low
Seabourne Creek	Jerry Trenta and Randolph Watson

TPWD / AgriLife Chapter Advisors

Prgm. Coordinator	Brandy Rader
Fort Bend Ag Agent	John Few

Socials

FACEBOOK—Like us!



Follow us for timely and seasonally relevant content. Learn about Coastal Prairie and engage with your volunteer organization.

MEMBERS ONLY To join the [private Facebook Group](#), send a request and wait for TMNCPC Admin to respond.



Instagram & Flickr— check out our photos!



[TMNCPC Instagram page](#): @tmn_coastal_prairie_chapter

[Coastal Prairie Flickr](#): <https://www.flickr.com/photos/coastalprairie/>

YouTube



Be sure to follow [YOUTUBE @TMNCoastalPrairie](#)

SLACK TIP — Better than Facebook



MEMBERS ONLY. This communications tool can provide timely notifications for favorite projects like [#seabourne](#). You can also share [#random](#), [#proj-scnp-archway-grasses](#), [#at](#), [#vsp](#) ... and more. ENGAGE as TMN!

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1402 Band Road
Fort Bend AgriLife Extension Office
Rosenberg, TX 77471-8678

Phone: (832) 225-6936

Visit Us On-line: www.CoastalPrairie.org

Email: Info@CoastalPrairie.org