Texas Master Naturalist

El Camino Real Chapter

# Milam County Nature Festival 2013

# APRIL 13, 2013 FAIR PARK - ROCKDALE, TEXAS

Kickoff Meeting May 22, 2012

Members present: Co-Chair John Pruett; Paul Unger, Dorothy Mayer, Jan Campbell, Jan Wise, Sherry Colley, Janice Johnson, Kim Summers, Don Travis, Katherine Bedrich, Sue Taylor, Cindy Bolch

Meeting time 6:00 pm – Fair Park, Rockdale, Texas

1. **Theme** – Discussion regarding the theme centered on the endangered Navasota Ladies’-tresses (a member of the orchid family that received very little support) and snakes. There was considerable discussion regarding snakes with a tentative theme title of “The good, bad, and ugly snakes of Milam County”, with perhaps the specific snake being the protected timber rattlesnake in southeast Milam County. A firm decision was tabled until the fall.
2. **Addition/Deletion of Projects** – There was no specific project mentioned for deletion, however there was discussion for getting the Texas Parks and Wildlife, Department of Fisheries, and Texas AgriLife to be more involved with a booth. One of the survey recommendations was for more animal exhibits. Cindy Bolch suggested that we pursue Bat Societies to be involved with a Bat table. The Central Texas Master Naturalists have said that they would like to be involved again with youth activities.
3. **Project Chairs** – It is requested that for the 2013 festival that project chairs be responsible for obtaining their own tables.
4. **Speakers** - As the theme is developed we will begin the search for speakers. If the theme is snakes we will need to line up a herpetologist as soon as possible.
5. **Open Discussion**:
   1. We discussed getting more involved with the public schools of Milam County. That would include encouraging school projects that we could judge and that would be presented to the public at the festival.
   2. We discussed the need to define projects as either adult or children centered. For those adult projects we discussed the need for stand-alone project display boards that would allow visitors to read about the project and then ask questions. Also for those adult projects prepare a program of scheduled oral presentations (2-3 for the festival) to enhance the display boards for those visitors that prefer that form of presentation.
   3. There was discussion on concessions and there was agreement that we needed to provide water for our guests. What is under consideration is whether we provide the water free (donated by business) or charge as a fundraiser for support of the festival. The need for food concessions is also under consideration.
   4. A Nature Festival mission statement was requested, and with that statement we will begin our fund raising activities by mail.

Submitted by: John Pruett