

El Camino Real chapter Texas Master Naturalist

Monthly Meeting Minutes

May 9, 2024 5:30 p.m.

All Saints Episcopal Church

- I. Welcome
 - A. Potluck and visiting – Theme is salads
 - B. Visitors: Chad Cryer, Austin Knight, Jack Luckey, Shannon Cohen, Jason Pelzel, Sheila Sager, Toni Cummins, and John Egger, Sr.
 - C. Speaker – Game Warden Mike Mitchell (ret)
 - a. Topic was Nurturing Nature: Understanding Ecological Grief and Its Impact.
 - b. There was a wide range of commentary and impressions about the talk. Very thought provoking.

- II. President’s report – Carolyn Henderson
 - A. Thank you for all you do when volunteering for TMN.
 - a. 49 active volunteers at the first of April have put in a total of 65,349 hours. Over the 16 year history of the chapter, there have been a total of 130 members who collectively performed 91,390 volunteer hours. This was at the beginning of April.
 - b. We currently have 42 active members. Some were removed from the membership roll for non-payment of dues.
 - c. TMN Tuesdays next week is about “No Mow Zones”. Presented by a TPWD biologist. Great info and AT hours if you need them.
 - d. The Board decided to try our luck at getting the City of Cameron to give us a no mow zone over by the baseball park/pool area. Linda Burgess recommended planting wildflowers on the area. It’s in the works.
 - B. Suggestions requested from you:
 - a. A Project chapter members can do twice a year.
 - b. Nominate wildflower to go on front of updated brochure – no bluebonnets.
 - c. Please send all suggestions to Carolyn.

- III. Board Members and Directors’ Reports
 - A. Vice President - Liz Lewis
 - a. Alan Rudd is the speaker next month. He says he has a different point of view from Mike Mitchell.

- B. Treasurer - Mike Conner – The treasury balance is \$6,673.71; funds were approved for the bird sanctuary and native flower bed mulching.
- C. Secretary - Sue Ann Kendall
 - a. Alan Rudd moved to approve last month's minutes, and Sandra Dworaczyk seconded.
 - b. Sue Ann will not be in town in June, so she requests a substitute.
 - c. She volunteered to write up the talk from tonight but has not done so yet.
- D. Membership - Patsy Coombs
 - a. 2024 Recertifications:
 - i. Sandra Dworaczyk
 - ii. Debra Harris
 - iii. Carolyn Henderson
 - iv. Michelle Lopez
 - v. Pamela Neely
 - vi. Cynthia Rek
 - vii. Gene Rek
 - b. Milestones
 - i. Toni Mason - 250 Volunteer Hours
- E. Student Training - Alan Rudd
 - a. We need to have the 2025 class ready to go by November.
 - b. We need to put flyers out around the towns we reach and will need volunteers for this.
- F. Communications - Michelle Lopez
 - a. She showed how to subscribe to the state office emails.
- G. AT/VMS approval - Pamela Neeley
 - a. We did have one of our projects rejected by the state office, because it was to be held in a retail establishment. We will remember this for the future.
- H. Publicity - Linda Burgess
 - a. She discussed Deep in the Heart, which advocates for more humane treatment of mountain lions in Texas.
- I. Hospitality – Ellen Luckey
 - a. Next month's theme is picnic food
- J. State Representative - Linda Jo Conn

- a. The March WOW Award went to Eric Neubauer for his new spider identification.
- b. April were Toni Mason and Cindy Rek.
- c. In City Nature Challenge 2024 we had 24 members participating.
 - i. Some members were in the top 10 for observations.
 - ii. The Salt Marsh moth caterpillar was the most common observation.
 - iii. There were 2414 observations and 779 species in the project.

K. Weekly Communications - Janice Johnson

IV. Old business

- a. Linda Jo Conn reports that bat monitors are in.
- b. All of Carolyn Henderson's Turk's Caps she planted from seed have returned.
- c. Neil Report:
 - i. planted sunflowers on Sunday that were up by Tuesday.
 - ii. He has had 26" of rain so far this year.
 - iii. He reported that he has three types of mimosa trees and wondered if anyone knew about different varieties, but the conversation veered off into them being invasive.
- d. Ann Collins is still collecting names for the bird-watching station. She would prefer descriptive names.
- e. Cindy Rek reports that there's lots of volunteer opportunities at the Wildscape.

V. New Business

- a. One of our potential students, Austin, is going to work for Paul Crump, which is cool.

VI. Adjourn – Forgot to do moving and seconding.

VT: .75 for the meeting

AT: 1.25 for the presentation

VT: 1 if you brought food