



# TEXAS MASTER NATURALIST ELM FORK CHAPTER

## Newsletter

Volume 12, Issue 8

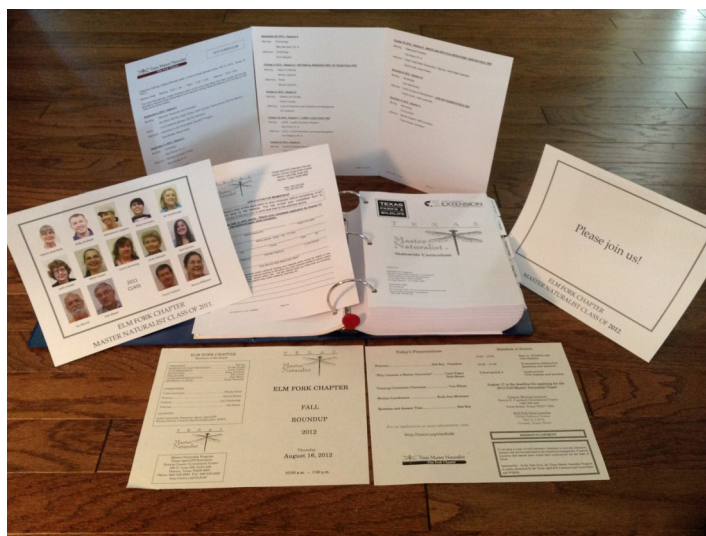
August 2012



## LOOKING AHEAD TO 2012 TRAINING CLASSES

*Article and photo  
by Judi and Van  
Elliott*

**F**all classes update: 64 people have expressed an interest in becoming an Elm Fork Master Naturalist and each have been personally contacted by email. Of these 64, 53 are considered very possible Prospects and of the 53, 9 have already submitted applications. The class size will be restricted to 20 due to limitations on some of the field trips. We are off to a great start.



*Class of 2011, curriculum, program for Roundup, Join Us!*

**R**ecently the State published information on their website to help promote many of the chapters' fall classes, which has led to an increase in queries. Additionally, **Jan Deatherage**, our Publicity Chairwoman, has written articles for many of our area publications, and this, too, has increased the interest in our Chapter. Thank you, Jan!

**V**an Elliott, as Training Chairman, contacts each person who expresses an interest and provides them information and updates on chapter events and class status. Prospects are invited to attend our monthly meetings and now we have 'regulars' who are attending meetings and even assisting with events!

**O**ur next monthly meeting will be Round Up on August 16, 2012 at the Steven E. Copeland Government Center, 1400 FM 424, Cross Roads, Texas 76227-7284. Our Hospitality Chairwoman, **Linda Cox**, said the theme is picnic style since there is no access to refrigeration or a microwave.

### Inside this issue:

Training Committee/Mentoring	3
Rob's Rambling	4
Volunteer hours recognized	5
Announcements	7
Southern Leopard Frog	9
Cottonwood borer	10
Some fishy facts	11
Field Note in Focus	12
Field-note-focus	13
Who we are	14

### Special points of interest:

- ♦ Roundup planning in the works
- ♦ Cottonwood borer in northeast Denton
- ♦ Who's mowing (or not!)
- ♦ Gone fishing?

At Round Up **Carol Fegan**, class of 2010, and **Dale Meyer**, class of 2011, will each give a brief presentation on 'Why I Became a Master Naturalist'. **Ruth Ann Morrison**, class of 2008, will talk about the Mentor Program and introduce the Mentors for 2012. Ruth Ann and Carol have dedicated themselves to making the Mentoring Program a success. Our Students have the benefit of a seasoned Chapter member as their guide and support system while they navigate through training and internship.

**Louise Wyss**, class of 2010, is one of our newer Training Committee members. In addition to supporting the committee, Louise has signed up as a Mentor for the 2012 class.

**Laurie Hemming**, class of 2011, is the other new Training Committee member. She's providing a tremendous service of handling the sign-up for AT hours, something new this year. Because more space is available at Global Spheres, the classes can be extended to welcome veteran members who would like to attend. \$10 for each session attended will be charged to help defray some of the expenses. A small price to pay for one-stop shopping for the AT requirements. Our Board of Directors determined information being presented will be updated and/or different enough to qualify as AT training. Laurie is maintaining a roster so if you wish to attend, contact Laurie at: **lhemming@sbcglobal.net**. If you are unable to reach Laurie, contact Van at **velliott2105@msn.com**. Each session is limited to 10 veterans so the focus can remain on the class. The field trips are not included due to space and logistics. What an exciting opportunity to share this training experience with Chapter members.



**Judi Elliott**, Training Committee Administrative Assistant, has been busy collecting and organizing 2012 class materials, assisting the Mentor Coordinator, Ruth Ann, and Carol with Mentor Guides and communications, preparing the Roundup agenda and a number of other things necessary to put on a successful class.

This Training Committee works well together and their second year has brought more great new ideas and a re-focus on Chapter goals. There is much excitement about putting on the 2012 class.

Our experiences will be shared at the annual meeting, October 26 – 28 at Camp Allen in Navasota, TX. Van, Judi and any other Training Committee member who wishes to attend, will lead a Round Table discussion on the importance of mentors during the training process, methods of encouraging new students to interact with each other during the training and how to get students to be an active part of the chapter. It will be a wonderful opportunity to give as well as receive new ideas on how to keep our training program meaningful and interesting.

As many of you know, we were saddened by the sudden passing of Steve Campbell. Steve had taught Herpetology for six years and will be missed. Ryan Blankenship contacted Van and introduced himself as a friend and protégé of Steve's and asked if he might fulfill Steve's commitment as a tribute to his friend. Ryan has extensive credentials and we are very appreciative that he wishes to contribute to the Elm Fork Chapter in this manner.

We thank you for sharing your ideas and are most appreciative of the support and encouragement given. See you in class soon!

# Training committee “firms up” plans for 2012 trainee mentoring

Article  
and photos—Laurie  
Hemming



It is that time of year when the Training Committee is busily putting together all the last minute details for the Fall training beginning September 4, 2012. Carol Fegan graciously opened up her home for a Mentor Orientation luncheon on August 2. These folks are all successful Master Naturalists, and they will foster success in others.

The 2012 mentors are **Jean Chaka** (2006), **Shirley Holland** (2003), **Cheryl Kesterson** (2005), **Diane Kohlhasse** (2008), **Andrea Krofina** (2007), **Dale Meyer** (2011), **Theresa Page** (2005), **Carl Patrick** (2010), **Dave Rowley** (2000), **CJ Solberg** (2005), **Donna Wolfe** (1998), and **Louise Wyss** (2010).



After a spectacular luncheon we got down to the business of mentor assignments and responsibilities. All of our mentors demonstrate positive attitudes and are ready to act as role models for the upcoming class. They are ready to share their knowledge and insight, and are giving their time freely to help the members of the 2012 class.



On a side note it is possible for Chapter Members to obtain Advanced Training hours by attending the sessions at Global Spheres in Corinth, TX. Keep in mind each session is limited to the first 10 who contact Laurie Hemming at [Lhemming@sbcglobal.net](mailto:Lhemming@sbcglobal.net) to reserve a spot. There is a \$10 fee payable at the door. You may go to <http://txmn.org/elmfork/files/2010/08/2012-Curriculum-06-10-12.pdf> for dates, class topics, and instructors.



From the President

## Rob's Ramblings—August 2012

**R**oundup is here! Please welcome our visitors to the August meeting. Most will be prospective students for our 2012 class and then potential members upon graduation and completion of 40 hours of service and 8 hours of advance training. Spend time with them to find out what their interests are and then point them to areas within the chapter where they can put those interests to use. Introduce them to other members. Don't let any visitor drift around the room. As I wrote last month, this is the most important chapter meeting of the year.

**T**he 2012 state conference will be held Oct 26-28 near Navasota, TX. Consider attending. It's a great opportunity to learn what other chapters and Master Naturalists are doing in the state. We hope Elm Fork Chapter will have a strong contingent of members attending this year.



**W**e reported a total of 7,492.0 volunteer service hours and 695.5 hours of advanced training for chapter members to the state for the first six months. For those of you who have been slow to report your hours, please take time to record them in the hours books at the August meeting. Several of you are close to certifying and/or reaching major milestones. Please get caught up with hours reporting. Also, everyone please be sure to sign each page; check prior sheets to be sure you have signed them.

**B**eware of the heat, “skeeters”, and other things that can cause problems if you aren't careful this time of year. Drink plenty of water, wear long-sleeved shirts, trousers tucked into your boots, broad-brimmed hat, and use bug spray when working outdoors this month (and every month for that).



## July Meeting Awards

Photos courtesy  
Marilyn Blanton  
and Owen Richards

*At July regular meeting, Vice President Susan Pohlen, made sure everyone was recognized for "services rendered" as well as presenting certificate of appreciation for the outstanding program from Arborist and Horticulturist, Bill Seaman.*



Raquel Bryson,  
recertification



Van Elliott



Bill Seaman, speaking  
and receiving certificate  
of appreciation



Vin Merrill,  
recertification



*Photo courtesy  
Marilyn Blanton*



Junior Master Naturalist,  
MacKenzie Bradley, receives  
certificate and pin from Jan Hodson



Carol Fagan reaches  
250 hour milestone

**Other milestones reached but recipients not pictured:**  
Owen Richards, 2000 hours; Wanda Odum, 1500 hours; and  
Ron Fellows, 4500 hours.

**Recertifying but not pictured:** Judi Elliott, C.J. Solberg,  
and Diane Wetherbee.



Well, Diane was photographed, sort of.  
Just remember, you can run but you can't  
hide from "trigger finger" Owen.

Sincere apologies to anyone who was  
missed in listing and/or photo

# INFORMATION AND OPPORTUNITIES



## LET'S PARTY—Y'ALL!



August is time for Master Naturalists to have a party. The theme for this year's event is — *Having a picnic at the Copeland Center*. Come with your favorite picnic dish to share with old and new friends. We will meet at our regular meeting time - at our new meeting place - **The Copeland Center**.

Project leaders will have displays and information about what we do to share with our prospective members and a good time is always had by all who attend. Be sure to mark **August 16** on your calendar for this year's **Round Up**.

Thanks,  
Linda Cox



**September 12 Field Trip:** Guided tour of **Dogwood Canyon Audubon Center**. (Limit: 20 people. Cost: \$6.00 per person) For more information contact: Peg La Point [tnplapoint@msn.com](mailto:tnplapoint@msn.com) 891-4984



*Ray Roberts Dam—  
public domain*

**What: Greenfest (Greenbelt Festival)**

**When: Saturday, September 29<sup>th</sup>, 2 PM – 8 PM**

**When: Saturday, September 29<sup>th</sup>, 2 PM – 8 PM**

**Where: Below the dam/Lake Ray Roberts**

This is a joint event between the Greenbelt Alliance of Denton County, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, the City of Denton, and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Proceeds from this event will be applied to reopening the equestrian trail between Highways 428 and 455, restoration of the Greenbelt restrooms, and possibly the installation of a wetland viewing deck and trail. Planned activities include kayaking, casting demonstrations, story-telling, climbing wall, pony rides, Buffalo soldiers, geocaching, archery, archaeology dig, birds of prey (Blackland Prairie), carriage and/or bike rides (DORBA), live reptile display, dinosaur valley exhibit, wild seed balls (Hagerman National Wildlife Refuge) and more. Careflite and mounted team expected to there, and possibly some hot air balloons.

**Volunteers are needed/Service is approved**

**Shifts are 2-4 and 4-6**

**Live Band 6-8 PM**

Elm Fork will have a booth and hopefully a planned activity. We need volunteers for our chapter booth/activity, but the following activities may also require additional volunteers if you're interested: kayaking, casting, climbing wall, archery, archaeology, birds of prey, live reptiles and dinosaur dig.

If you wish to volunteer please send your name to **Susan Pohlen**: 940 686-5739; [spohlen@verizon.net](mailto:spohlen@verizon.net). **Please specify areas of interest and preferred shift!**

*For planning purposes, please provide your information as soon as possible.*



### CONTACT INFORMATION CHANGES

If you have any changes in your contact information (name, address, telephone number or numbers, and/or email address) you want the chapter and members to know about please send the changes to:

Monica Chaffin [chaffincasa@gmail.com](mailto:chaffincasa@gmail.com); Donna Wolfe [donna.wolfe@dentoncounty.com](mailto:donna.wolfe@dentoncounty.com); & Susan Pohlen [spohlen@verizon.net](mailto:spohlen@verizon.net)

If you have an idea for, or information about a **speaker**, please send your suggestions, with all contact information, to **Peg La Point**, programs chairperson.

[tnplapoint@msn.com](mailto:tnplapoint@msn.com) 891-4984

### BECOME A CITIZEN FORESTER:

Application for the 2012 Fall Dallas Citizen Forester training class are being accepted. The training is September 13 to November 16 and includes three Thursday evening classes and two Saturday session. Citizen Foresters volunteer for various tree planting and education events throughout the community. They are dedicated to the preservation, maintenance and expansion of a healthy Dallas urban forest. The enrollment deadline is August 31.

Email: [citizenforester@tx.rr.com](mailto:citizenforester@tx.rr.com)

### Pollinator Pocket Garden August Work Schedule



The **Pollinator Garden** is looking great even through these summer months! We are currently working on our hardscape projects for the garden. We are looking for experienced landscape or gardening volunteers to guide the community service kids group we get on Thursdays. As usual with the workdays during the week please wait at the gate and we will let you in. On Saturdays just let the gatehouse woman named Virginia know that your there for the pollinator garden and the fee will be waived for you. Remember to wear protective clothing and sunscreen and we will have water there for you. Here are the following dates for August!

Thursday the 9th-8am-11am  
Saturday the 18th-7:30am-11am  
Thursday the 23rd-8am-11am  
Saturday the 25th-7:30am-11am

#### Contact:

**Rose Carrizales:** Phone (940)395-7581 Email [rosemarys\\_email@yahoo.com](mailto:rosemarys_email@yahoo.com)

**Michi Harper:** Phone (940) 597-5141 (text only) Home (940) 591-8369 Email [m\\_harper@verizon.net](mailto:m_harper@verizon.net)

*From Karen Mangum*

### Citizen Science MARS

Enjoyed the Mars Science Lab rover Curiosity landing? Curiosity will be looking for signs of life left behind in the soil and rocks on Mars. We may have similar or same microbes living and leaving their signs within extreme environments here on Earth.

Want to help NASA map life on Mars by mapping extreme environments on Earth? Then go to:

<http://getmapper.com/index.php>





*Elf owl*

## World's smallest owl

The young of the elf owl fledge from cacti, in fence posts and telephone poles, and various trees including cottonwoods, Arizona sycamore, alligator and junipers. Because of their small size, they feed mostly on insects and arachnids. If disturbed, it may utter a sharp *cheeur*, turn its head to the side, and raise a long wing to cover face and breast.

**Audubon** July-August 2012

**To hear the full repertoire of vocalizations:**

[http://www.xeno-canto.org/america/browse.php?query=elf+owl&species\\_nr=](http://www.xeno-canto.org/america/browse.php?query=elf+owl&species_nr=)

Permission not required to reuse photo, but you may not claim that you took the photo yourself. --[Hayford Peirce](#) 8 July 2005 22:21 (UTC)

## Southern Leopard Frog—from Joanne Fellows

### *Rana sphenoccephala*

If you see a small (5-7 cm (2.3.5 in) brown and green frog with smooth skin and a long pointed head, it is might be a Southern Leopard Frog. They are found in the eastern third of the state. They are hard to see since they are nocturnal, and hide during the day in vegetation at the edge of the water. If seen, they hop leap in the water and swim away underwater, hiding on the bottom where it is well camouflaged.



Tadpolls

Reference:  
<http://www.herpsocietytexas.org>

## Cottonwood borer (*Plectrodera scalator*)

Article and photos courtesy Dorothy Thetford — photos taken recently in northeast Denton

**Biology:** This black and white, long-horned, wood-boring beetle is perhaps the most attractive longhorn in Texas and is certainly among the largest. The grub stage feeds and burrows within cottonwood trees and black willows, where it can cause great damage over a two-year period, including a feeding behavior that may girdle the tree.



Adults have black wings and do fly, though we have never seen what must be an impressive flight. Males fight aggressively, and the winner is the beetle that seizes its opponent's antenna first. Females lay their eggs on the trunk at or a little below ground level. When handled, the struggling insect often stridulates, making chirping noises by rubbing plates of its thorax together.

**Distribution:** From the Atlantic Ocean to New Mexico, with perhaps its greatest concentration within the central plains states.

**Remarks:** Length = 40 mm. Cottonwood borers sometimes erupt in large numbers from trees growing well within city limits in central Texas.



Ref: INVERTEBRATES of CENTRAL TEXAS WETLANDS  
Stephen Welton Taber & Scott B. Fleenor  
Texas Tech University Press 2005

Buddy Cole  
Honorary Member  
Elm Fork Chapter  
Class of 2001

## Some Fishy Facts

All photos are in the  
public domain

**QUESTION:** When is a bass not really a bass?

**ANSWER:** When it's a Largemouth bass, Smallmouth bass, Spotted bass or a Rock bass.

So what's the deal here?



*Small-mouth*



*Large-mouth*

The deal is how fish common names are not always representative of their true scientific family. The only true bass we have are white bass (*Morone chrysops*) also known as sand bass, the striped bass (*Morone saxatilis*), yellow bass (*Morone mississippiensis*) and there is a hybrid of white bass/striped bass. These are all what is called Temperate basses of the Family Moronidae and for those who may be from the northeastern U.S. there is another member of this family called White perch (*Morone Americana*) which is very similar in looks to our white bass.

The Largemouth bass (*Micropterus salmoides*), Smallmouth bass (*Micropterus Dolmities*), Spotted bass (*Micropterus punctulatus*) are all members of the sunfish family Centrarchidae. There is one more, the Guadalupe bass (*Micropterus treculii*) which is found in south central Texas which I mention because it is the **official state fish of Texas**. The sunfish family also includes our well known black (*Pomoxis nigromaculatus*) and white crappie (*Pomoxis annularis*).



*Guadalupe bass*

*Rock bass*



I mentioned Rock bass (*Ambloplites rupestris*) since it is listed a member of the Moronidae family but only occurs in a very small area of south central Texas; and the fact that people sometimes call our Green sunfish (*Lepomis cyanellus*) and Warmouth sunfish (*Lepomis gulosus*) rock bass or goggle eye.

Since you are now very knowledgeable about these fishes, you should also know that until 1932 the only place white bass lived in Texas was in Caddo Lake on the Texas/Louisiana border. That year our old Texas Game, Fish and Oyster Commission, forerunner of today's Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, transferred 13, yes, thirteen, white bass from Caddo and put them in our own Lake Dallas on the Elm Fork of the Trinity River just east of Denton. These are very prolific fish and by 1935 they were being caught in large numbers and in 1938 transfers of whites were made to lakes Buchanan, Medina, Eagle Mountain and others. Now they occur in practically the entire state, and it all started right here.



*White bass*

I caught my first white bass in spring 1941 when I was 6 years old fishing with my Dad in the Elm Fork from an old wooden boat using cane poles and minnows. Since then I have caught them in many Texas Lakes including their original home of Caddo Lake.





**“FIELD NOTES IN FOCUS”**

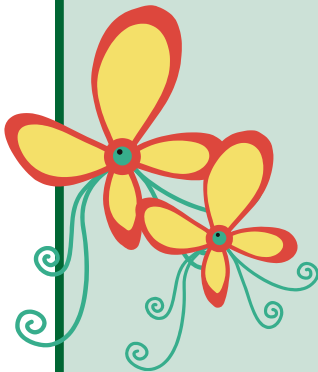
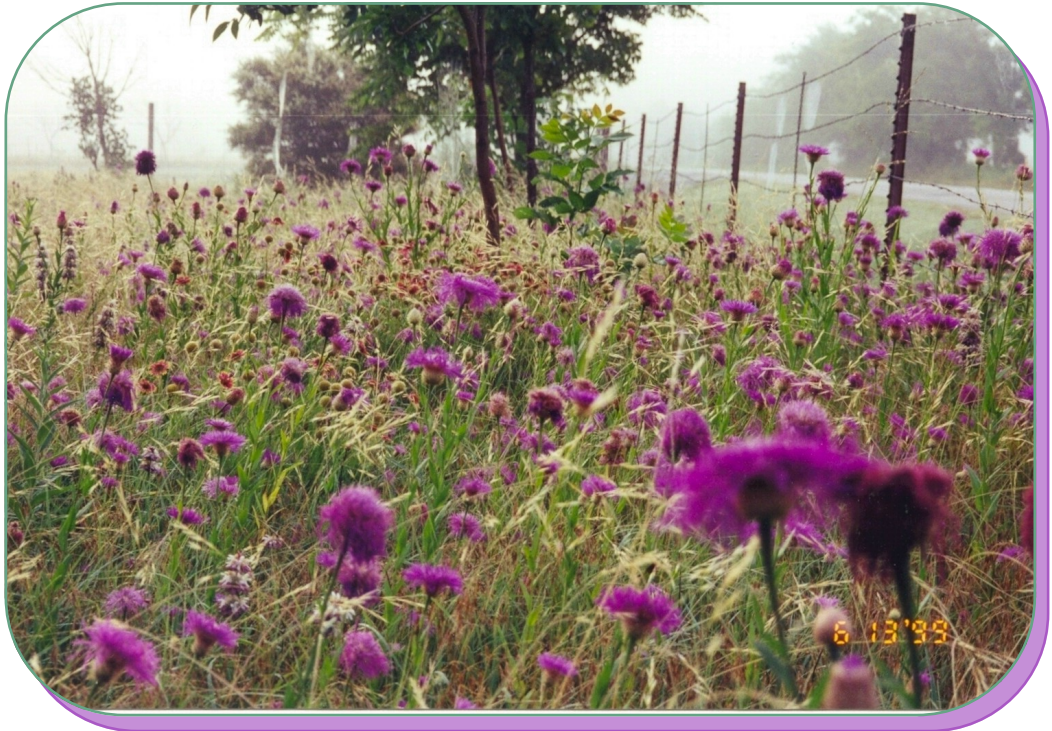


**HONEY BEE ON INDIAN BLANKET—FROM PAULA MCCORMICK**

*Featuring Master Naturalist photographers—flora and fauna as you see them*

## FIELD—NOTE—FOCUS

**Fritz Poppe:**  
“This is what  
you get when  
you don’t mow  
your yard.”



I am so very humbled by the caring spirit of the members of Elm Fork Chapter that has been exhibited during my long and continuing saga of disability. The phone calls, “just checking on you” emails, individual cards, and the group card are priceless encouragement. I still have a few “trails to hike and mountains to climb” before full recovery, but my spirits are renewed each time I receive or think of your kindnesses. Hopefully, with the physical therapy I am undergoing, I will be able to tackle a few of those trail hikes or small mountains in real time before this year’s end.

W



ho could have expected anything less from a group of people who joined Master Naturalist because they have a caring heart for our Earth and its creatures — people just happen to be of the 2-legged variety!

With heart-felt thanks — *Wanda Odum*

**TEXAS MASTER NATURALIST  
ELM FORK CHAPTER**

Texas AgriLife Extension  
306 North Loop 288, Suite 222  
Denton, TX 76209-4887

940-349-2883



*Education, Conservation, Preservation,  
Restoration*

**Editor's note:** If you have enjoyed any part of this newsletter—articles or photos—please convey your appreciation to the many talented persons who make this newsletter possible!

**OUR MISSION . . .**

*"to develop a corps of well-informed volunteers who provide education, outreach, and service dedicated to the beneficial management of natural resources and natural areas within our community"*



*Beetle hard at work—Photo courtesy L. Hemming*

## Members of the Board

PRESIDENT—Rob Roy

IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT—George Kragle

VICE-PRESIDENT—Susan Pohlen

SECRETARY—Diane Kohlhasse

TREASURER—Kay Crowe

CLASS REPRESENTATIVE—Dale Meyer

MEMBER-at-LARGE—Doug Chadwick

**COMMITTEES:**

Communications:

Newsletter—Wanda Odum (chair rotation with Sharon Barr & Monica Chaffin)

Projects: Marian Kester

Publicity: Jan Deatherage

Training: Van Elliott

**ADVISORS:**

Janet Laminack, Extension Agent

Patrick Schutz, TP&W

## Monthly Chapter Meetings

**9:30 a.m. preceded by a social time at 9:00 a.m. on the third Thursday of each month.**

**Chapter meetings are open to the public.**

**Next meeting: August 16, 2012**

**Membership Roundup and Luncheon**

**September 20, 2012 General Meeting:**

Marcus Gillespie will review Last Child in the Woods by Richard Louv, followed by Karen Schoeve discussing environmental educational activities for children.

**Location: Steven E. Copeland Government Center, 1400 FM 424, Cross Roads, TX 76227**

<http://dentoncounty.com/Locations/GetLocationMap.asp?BCode=51>

## Board Meetings

**The Board meets each second Thursday of the month at 9:30 a.m., Denton County AgriLIFE Extension Office. The Board last met August 9, 2012. Next meeting is September 13, 2012**

**Board meetings are open to members.**