



White-faced Ibis, *Plegadis chihi*

From Joanne Fellows

No Snow Geese at Hagerman National Wildlife Refuge on our visit Sept 21. The fields are showing green shoots, so it should not be long before the ducks and geese arrive. In the mean time, we were treated to a large flock of White-faced Ibis stopping at the refuge on its way to winter in Mexico. When in non-breeding plumage distinguishing a White-faced from a Glossy Ibis is difficult. The White-faced adults have red eyes year round. Juveniles usually cannot be distinguished. The range of the White-faced and Glossy overlaps in a small area along the Gulf Coast. They breed in large colonies and fly with their neck outstretched.





This Time of Year

By Bob Ross

At this time of year we all receive an inordinate amount of mail asking for donations. We are coming upon the season of giving and I have no problem being asked for a donation. Of course, one wrestles with their conscience as to whether or not they should give money and how much.

I recently received a letter asking me to give to a particular homeless shelter. The donation was based around giving human beings a full Thanksgiving meal at this shelter on Thanksgiving Day. The letter explained what one meal cost and how many people would probably show up to get a meal. After a minute or two of thought, I immediately gave a monetary donation that would help feed a dozen people this upcoming Thanksgiving. I tell you this not to make you think I am such a good person, but to tell you what triggered me giving a donation.

As a youngster in the 1950's I went with my dad to this particular shelter and watched my dad work in the serving line on Thanksgiving Day. So, when I received the recent letter from the shelter I immediately went back in time and remembered the experience I shared with my dad. I remember asking my dad why he gave of his time, particularly on Thanksgiving Day away from our family for a few hours, and he responded by explaining to me how fortunate we were as a family. It obviously stuck with me! As an aside, this particular homeless shelter is celebrating 125 continuous years of serving the community.



*Building is part of MN volunteering —Peg La Point working on kiosk at Clear Creek
(photo Jan Thompson)*

During this same period of my childhood, while living in a small town, I remember going downtown one Saturday morning and being on the courthouse square. As I was walking around I discovered something that totally awestruck me. It was a couple of U.S. Marines in their Dress Blues uniforms. They were standing next to a trailer with sideboards accepting new and used toys given by the local populace. As a post-WWII kid going to the movie house and watching such films as, *Sands of Iwo Jima*, *Flying Leatherneck*, *Guadalcanal Diary* and *Halls of Montezuma*, well, I was ready to join them as a pre-teen and get sized for my own blue uniform. However, I went back home and got a couple of my newer toys and returned to the square where I proudly stood and waited my turn to hand the toys to one of my smartly-dressed heroes. As he took the toys he looked down at me and said, "Hey, thanks buddy. Are you going to be a Marine someday?" He never knew what effects those few words had on me. I have never stopped giving to Toys for Tots since that day, and yes, I did become a Marine serving as a Viet Nam era veteran. As another aside, Toys for Tots was founded in 1947 in California by the U.S. Marine Corps Reserve. In the early days, the reservists would spend part of their drill weekend restoring used toys that would be given to children as Christmas gifts. Toys for Tots accepted new and used toys from 1947 through 1979. Beginning in 1980, only new toys have been accepted by the Marine Toys for Tots Foundation.

Each of us own memories about past holidays and giving. We all have given to countless causes in the past and will continue giving in the future. It is part of our DNA, as Master Naturalists, to be givers. Members of EFC give each and every day to some project, or some person or persons. It is what we do best. Be proud of your certification and status as a Master Naturalist.

Documenting nature is part of MN volunteering



Alex Lieban



Being a Master Naturalist often time means that you give a lot of time and effort to a project to possibly never seeing the final outcome. You may have built or restored a hiking trail to never see the enjoyment of trail users when you are not present. You may have been involved in a bird count to never get the final analysis as to whether or not it was successful or to know the data accumulated.

But, sometimes you may get the golden moment I had just a few weeks ago. I volunteer at Elm Fork Education Center on the UNT campus. The Center circulates approximately 17,000 students through their program each year. We have members in our chapter who do an excellent job of being "expedition guides" at EFEC. When the students arrive I get my "expedition" and tell them I am their "guide" and my name is Mr. Bob.



Remember to share your bounty this season!

One afternoon I was shopping in a store and this young man walked up to me with his mom and said, "Hi Mr. Bob. Do you remember me?" He was a fifth grader who had been in one of my "expeditions". He began telling his mom what all we did when he attended EFEC and how much fun he had had going through the educational programs. Well, there you go! I got to see a result of some of my volunteering efforts. And, who knows, that fifth grader may store that experience in his memory and years later it may come to the surface again. Hopefully, he will have good thoughts just as I did remembering my dad serving meals at a shelter on Thanksgiving Day or seeing my heroes accepting toys for children to have a little better Christmas.

Remembering Long-time Member



Buddy Cole

With sadness we announce the death of long-time member of the Elm Fork Chapter, **Ralph Leslie "Buddy" Cole, Jr.** Buddy was in the 2001 class and became a Certified Texas Master Naturalist the following year. He was involved with a variety of projects through the years and wrote frequent articles for our newsletter. Some years after certifying Buddy was made an honorary member of the chapter, one of only five so honored. Buddy Cole was a former county judge, a member of the National Guard and a litany of other community service positions.





“FIELD NOTES IN FOCUS”



Bunny— from the gallery of Alex Lieban

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



Editor note: The following is a story worth sharing — initial planning meeting was on 11-14-2014 but this is a “heads up” for this developing project and you may be called upon to help in the future!

Help is needed to get a butterfly garden at UNT underway!

The other day a nice man named Peter Palacios happened into the Elm Fork office to try to find people who would help coordinate an effort to turn the pretend wildflower garden on the Eagle Point campus into a real one. He lives on Willowood, is on the staff at UNT, and walks his dog past the weed patch by the tennis courts that UNT has named a Lady Bird Johnson garden. It is, essentially, a place they have not mowed for a couple of summers. It has been extensively bulldozed over the years but there are a few specimens left from when it was a rough on the golf course.

Peter's timing was amazing for me, because for the past two weeks I have been preoccupied with the Monarch butterflies in our garden. As I watch a dozen or more try to get nourishment from our small patch of Mistflower I want to kick myself for not having the energy to stay with our proposal of six years ago, when we urged the university to install demonstration gardens on the “green belt”. You may recall, I created plans for gardens of various kinds, especially emphasizing the raising and feeding of Monarchs. After getting slapped down three times, I gave up – much to my shame. Perhaps they refused my plan to establish a large butterfly garden in the big field south of the duck pond because they knew they will eventually build there (although I doubt that tearing out a garden would bother them very much, since they plan to let the magnificent oaks on the hill be destroyed by a convention center).



Photo—Dorothy Thetford

But enough grousing about the past. Now, we have an energetic young man who doesn't know much about wildflowers, bees or butterflies, but is willing to learn and help coordinate the efforts of citizens who value these things. Hooray! He even has buy-in from the UNT grounds department so that we might be able to have a source of water.

Peter would like to gather gardeners, naturalists, students and interested citizens at the location at 10:00 am on November 14 to survey the site, discuss possibilities and do a little weeding to see what is there and not there. At this time of year, when we see the Monarchs struggling to get to Mexico and when we see the bee and butterfly populations finally recovering from that terrible spring freeze, it seems so encouraging and exciting to think that we might be given a chance to give them long-term help. If you would like to share your expertise or just wield a tool, please let me know. We will need people who know plants, who can help make a long-range plan, and who want to share some elbow grease.

PLEASE LET ME KNOW IF YOU CAN JOIN US!!!!
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