

Take notes

Meet your . . .

HISTORIAN

(Via the winding route of Training and Secretary.)

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he Secretary is recruited and ultimately approved of by the Board. When the Secretary had to step aside in 2012 I had the opportunity to complete her term. In 2013 I was fortunate enough to fill the position and I continued there through 2014.



As Secretary you have the ability to work closely with Chapter management and learn how and why business is handled as it is. Not only within the Chapter, but also on a State level. You attend every Board and General meeting, preparing minutes for each. The minutes are approved by the Board or the membership and subsequently posted on the Chapter website.

Any necessary typing of correspondence or forms is done by the Secretary. There is also an element of recordkeeping so the Board can access needed historical data.

Being on the Board of Directors enables one to participate in various projects, or attend events as a representative of the Board. You become a liaison between the members and the Board.

Moving from Secretary to Historian was a natural transition. During my time as Secretary I learned there was no historical data compiled for the Chapter. I searched available minutes and documents from the time the Chapter began in 1999 to present. Going forward, the Chapter will have reference binders containing membership rosters, records of officers and awards, printed ads, Open House programs as well as a number of other things.

If you are someone who likes compiling and maintaining an accurate history, please contact the Board. In 2016 we need someone to step up and continue with these reference binders. It is not a difficult job, and it is a rewarding one! You can enjoy being on the Board and helping the growth of Elm Fork Chapter.

On a personal level, Van and I joined Elm Fork Chapter in 2009. In 2010 we assumed the duties of the Training Committee. We tremendously enjoyed those duties through 2012. At that time we stepped into new roles and continued only as advisors to the Training Committee. Prior to Elm Fork, in my working-for-pay life, I was a Legal Assistant to a group of attorneys in a corporate setting. Originally from the Corpus Christi area, through several corporate moves we ended up in Flower Mound in 1992. Van and I celebrated our 46th anniversary this year. No kids, no grandkids and no pets which allows us way too much time for Master Naturalist!

Judi Elliott

Big Beetle – Big Eyes – Big Jumper

Eyed Click Beetle

Alaus Oculatus

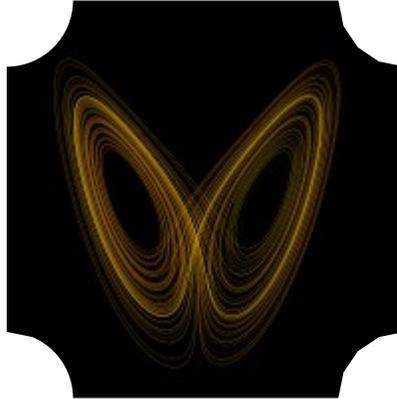
This large beetle with huge eyespots on the pronotum is fascinating. Just like small click beetles, they make a loud clicking sound and can jump as high as 6 inches. Turn them on their back and watch them hop away from you. They are considered a beneficial insect because their larvae, wireworms, are voracious predators.



Master Naturalists Exhibit The Butterfly Effect

By Bob Ross

The *Butterfly Effect* is a physics concept coined by Edward Lorenz, who was an American mathematician and meteorologist. Trying to understand the chaos of science, Lorenz developed the idea that a single butterfly flapping its wings on one side of the globe can, in theory, start a hurricane on the other.



Theorists use the concept to try to illustrate such things as all the variables that come together to influence scientific happenings. For example, the repeatedly rolling of dice is never the same due to varying air currents, temperature, barometric pressures, etc., etc., affect each roll differently. Although the dice may produce the same number each time, like a Lucky Seven, each roll was accomplished differently due to all the chaotic things happening in science. Remember this when you make your next casino run to Oklahoma!

Another American, Chris Rosati of Durham, North Carolina wondered if *The Butterfly Effect* could influence things in other ways. Rosati, a former marketing executive, has the terminal disease ALS. Rather than feeling sorry for himself, Rosati has decided to test if *The Butterfly Effect* can be used in random acts of kindness. He became somewhat a local Robin Hood figure (stealing from the rich and giving to the poor). He joked he might utilize products from his commercial neighbor Krispy Kreme donuts. He commented he might “steal” a Krispy Kreme truck full of donuts and drive up in front of a school and give all the donuts away. Well, Krispy Kreme heard of his plot and got onboard with his scheme. Krispy Kreme was no longer the “enemy” but one of Rosati’s biggest allies. They supplied him with a truck full of donuts and the truck was driven to the front of a local school and donuts were passed out freely to the students. I am sure everyone was happy except the teachers who had to deal with all the sugar highs!

Another Rosati tactic to test *The Butterfly Effect* in random acts of kindness was when he entered a restaurant and went over to two young sisters sitting at a table eating. He gave each one of them \$50 and told them to do something good with it. Wow! They did something really neat. The sisters combined their money and used the \$100 to provide a feast for everyone in an African village in Sierra Leone. The sisters’ dad had lived and worked in this particular village when he was younger and a member of the Peace Corps. The feast was a celebration for the village being Ebola-free.

How do Master Naturalists exhibit *The Butterfly Effect* you may ask? Each time a Master Naturalist walks down a trail, rows a canoe on a river, or simply checks a bluebird nesting box, the variables of science are being stirred and altered. But, so does everyone else affect science chaos in their daily living. What make Master Naturalist more unique than many others in this world are their acts of kindness. They utilize *The Butterfly Effect* in ways of kindness to pay-it-forward.

As a Master Naturalist walking the trail, rowing the canoe, or checking bluebird boxes, you often have others with you who are not as familiar as you are with your knowledge and experience. You are passing it forward to other generations, both younger and older.

At last month’s Round Up I noticed all the training committee ambassadors, and other Elm Fork members, walking up and introducing themselves to newcomers. The newbies felt welcomed and had many nice things to say about the event. Be careful! Each of you was exhibiting *The Butterfly Effect* with random acts of kindness



Snow-on-the-Prairie stands with Dorothy Thetford



Height of plant in perspective along-side author 5'6" tall



SNOW-ON-THE-PRAIRIE

(Euphorbia bicolor)

You saw what??? Yes, snow in August-September, on the prairie, in Texas!

Our native wildflower of Texas (in the Euphorbiaceae family), commonly called Snow-on-the-Prairie (Euphorbia bicolor), attracts attention to the hot, dry prairie with its cool, green-and-white striped bracts. These 3 to 4 inch long bracts are longer than the leaves of the plant, and they completely dominate the tiny white flower structures.

Actually, the white structure is not a flower, but a cyathium, "the specialized inflorescence of Euphorbia, consisting of a flower-like, cup-shaped involucre which carries the several true flowers within," as defined by M. Enquist in his book, WILDFLOWERS OF THE TEXAS HILL COUNTRY.

Each 5-petaled structure, only 1/4-inch diameter, looks like it's been tucked into the base of the bracts as an afterthought, almost hidden by the long, wispy bracts. Each plant produces male flowers with only stamens and female flowers with fruit and seed-producing pistils.

Snow-on-the-Prairie is a single, stout, hairy, 3 to 5 foot tall stem which splits, midway up the stem, into a perfect triangular set of (three) branches. With ample moisture, these three branches may grow 6 to 8 inches longer and split into additional sets of three branches.

A milky latex weeps from any broken stem, leaf or bract. Euphorbias contain this milky sap, which can cause dermatitis to sensitive-skinned persons, and, is toxic. Since livestock does not eat this plant, Snow-on-the-prairie is normally found in very large colonies throughout the Grand Prairie, Blackland Prairie, east to East Texas, and from Montague County southwest to Johnson County. A single plant is intriguing, but a colony is breathtaking.

As flowers mature, green, hairy, 3-seeded capsules develop and stay on the plant until they dry, harden, pop open and disperse seeds. This ballistic dispersal of seeds explains the scattered arrangement of plants on the prairie. Seeds from this annual must be collected after the pod dries, but before it pops open. Camelia Maier, Ph.D., Associate Professor, Department of Biology at Texas Woman's University in Denton Texas, is currently researching E. bicolor's estrogen content as possibly being instrumental in medicinal usage for 'pain' and for 'cancer' treatment.

Snow-on-the-Prairie blooms for several weeks during August and September, so take time to touch the leaves, and, use a magnifying lens to closely inspect the downy-soft, hairy details of this uniquely beautiful wildflower. You'll quickly learn to identify the mystery-mirage covering the hot, dry prairie, even from your car.

Dorothy Brown Thetford

MN Class 2001

All photos courtesy of Dr. Maier and D. Thetford