

# **El Camino Real chapter Texas Master Naturalist Meeting Minutes**

Thursday, September 8, 2022

All Saints Episcopal Church Meeting Rooms

5:30 p.m.

Attendees are on the sign-in sheet.

Zoom was unavailable due to an issue with the Chapter laptop.

## **I. Welcome**

- A. Potluck meal at 5:30 - theme was casseroles. Thank you to all who brought food.
- B. Speaker at 6 pm - Debra Sorenson, El Camino Real Chapter member. Topic was vultures.
  - a. Fascinating talk on the different kinds of vultures and their lives.
  - b. We should all be able to distinguish turkey vultures from black vultures now.

## **II. Meeting began 7 pm**

- A. President Carolyn Henderson: Greeted visitors, including Barbara Holly, City Manager, and Dick and Malda Burns from Rockdale. George Bowman, a Cameron resident who had a vulture grow up on his porch was also a special guest.
- B. Please check your volunteer service hours. Recertification requires 8 AT hours and 40 VS/VE hours.
  - a. Members need 40 hours of Volunteer hours by the end of the year.
  - b. New members need to have 40 more in the year after they graduate.
- C. If you have some good pictures we could use for a new chapter trifold presentation board, please send it to Donna Lewis.
  - a. Liz Lewis will take digital photos and print them for Donna.
- D. The Board has approved holding the Christmas party/December meeting at the Milam Community Theater building (Williams Community Center) on Friday, December 9. Thorndale Meat Market will cater. Cost per person will be \$25. Bring family and friends.
  - a. Bring your own wine or desserts.
  - b. We will send a map, or you can come to a youth play and see Linda Jo's grandson act. The plays are getting better and better now that they are under new management.
  - c. There will be special recognition awards and the ever-popular white elephant gift exchange.
  - d. If you would like to recommend someone for a special recognition award at the party, send the name and reason you think the award is deserved to Carolyn.
- E. The board voted to increase the annual membership dues from \$20 to \$30 for 2023. Inflation is driving up the cost of materials needed by the chapter on a monthly basis. We are a 501c3 (charity), so donations are deductible. Hint, hint.

## **III. Officers and directors' reports**

- a. Vice-president Liz Lewis was unable to attend. Mary Ann Melton will speak at next month's meeting.
- b. Treasurer Mike Connor was unable to attend. Here is information from the Board meeting on September 6:
  - i. The treasury is down to \$3683, which is the lowest he's seen it.
  - ii. If our January class fills out like we expect, that should bring in some funds.
  - iii. We will also be selling some native plants during Nature Days in November.
- c. Secretary Sue Ann Kendall: Kim Summers moved approve minutes of the August Chapter meeting; Sandra Dworaczyk seconded. Motion passed. The minutes were approved.
- d. Membership Lisa Milewski:
  - i. Presented Scott Berger his 250 volunteer hour pin.
  - ii. Presented Scott and Alan Rudd with their 2023 recertification pins.
  - iii. Additionally, Liz Lewis and Mike Conner recertified and will receive pins when they next attend a meeting.
- e. Communications Don Travis: Don was unable to attend. Donny Grigg did the A/V for the meeting.
  - i. There were computer issues with the Chapter laptop, so Sue Ann's laptop was used for the presentation.
  - ii. Because of that, we were unable to do Zoom for the meeting, and apologize to those who had intended to view it.
- f. AT coordinator Pamela Neeley: Pamela encourages us to participate in the lights out program, which has been described in our weekly emails.
- g. Project Coordinator Donna Lewis:
  - i. We are redoing the tri-fold display we use at events and need recent photos. Please send real photos to Donna and digital ones to Liz Lewis.
  - ii. Victoria Everett has volunteered for us to host a table at the Rockdale Library, with us bringing food and drinks, first Friday in January (1/6). We can pass out brochures. First Friday Coffee.
- h. State Rep Linda Jo Conn:
  - i. Gave Victoria her gold star for being encouraging.
  - ii. There is a new project involving the El Camino Real de los Tejas that we can volunteer on. It's building a trail on the property of the Connors.
  - iii. Linda Jo has a copy of the books we have categorized to be a library. We now have shelves. She and Jackie Thornton are working on the library, and donations are welcome.
  - iv. Phyllis Shuffield suggested bringing books to the meetings to share.
  - v. There is an iNaturalist BioBlitz near Oklahoma. She and Eric Neubauer are going to represent our chapter.
  - vi. There is going to be an iNaturalist and Texas Master Naturalist gathering October 7-9 in Florence. Contact Linda Jo for more information.
  - vii. Observation of the month was Gene Rek's observation of a rain lily! We had 312 observations of 191 species on iNaturalist last month. Thank you to everyone who participates.

- i. Student Training Kathy Lester: She not present, but Carolyn reports that we may be up to our minimum of 10 students for the 2023 class. We can accept up to 20 students.
- j. Hospitality Catherine Johnson: Nature Days are coming up – find things to donate to the Wildscape or the people who come to the events. There will be native plants, bee houses, cypress trees...etc. They could use rocks, borders, etc. The hours are 9 am -12 pm each Saturday in November. These are a great way to meet people and get volunteer hours.

#### IV. New Business

- a. Sue Ann requested the squash casserole recipe from the potluck, which Patricia Coombs sent. Thank to Patricia for all her contributions to our food!  
[https://bakeitwithlove.com/wprm\\_print/40356/](https://bakeitwithlove.com/wprm_print/40356/)
- b. Victoria Everett reports that there will be a stargazing event in Rockdale at 8 pm October 1.
- c. Linda Jo wanted to know who had seen a horned toad in Rockdale recently. Let her know if it was you or you know someone who did.
- d. Catherine wanted to survey what plants had survived over the summer. She distributed sheets of paper we could fill out to share what survived and what didn't make it. We can bring the information to the next meeting.
- e. Master Gardeners is having a presentation on trees Sept 21 at 6 pm in the old Bea's kitchen. Good luck with that, since it's currently under construction and full of tools and dust.

#### V. Adjourn

Victoria motioned to adjourn; numerous people seconded. Meeting adjourned at 7:45 pm.  
.75 VT At a Chapter Meeting  
1 hour AT for presentation

Minutes respectfully submitted by Sue Ann Kendall, chapter secretary.

That's a male neon skimmer, by the way.

