

## El Camino Real chapter Texas Master Naturalist

### Monthly Meeting Minutes

Jan 12, 2023 - 5:30 p.m.

All Saints' Episcopal Church

- I. Welcome
  - A. 5:30 pm Potluck
- II. Speaker – Pierre Deyris, bee specialist, spoke about his methods of natural beekeeping. He lives in Taylor now but was originally from France.  
Talk was 1.25 hours
- III. Meeting started 7:30
  - A. End of year report/ awards available on the website in [minutes from December 2022](#).
  - B. New class starts next Thursday. Members are welcome, but 12 or 13 students have priority on seats. Volunteers are needed to set up plates etc., for potluck for them – **Kathy Lester gives more details below.**
  - C. Board retreat January 22 – please send us your ideas for projects or places to explore. If you have a special project let us know, because these projects need Board approval, as required by the State. There was some debate about what this means. **See additional information in the addendum.**
  - D. The updated Chapter Operating Handbook was approved in December and submitted to State Office. This is [on our website on the Library page](#).
  - E. Events from Catherine Johnson:
    - a. She has arranged a trip to Native Texas Nursery near Manor. She read and passed out additional information. The group decided that the trip will be on Tuesday, January 24 10am-12pm. It will be two hours. To carpool participants can meet at Walmart in Rockdale at 8 am. Participants can meet for lunch afterward.  
In addition:
    - b. There will be an event for students sponsored by AgriLife on Tuesday, February 7 at Bird and Bee Farm, around 10-11 am. Members can come and get AT and VT hours. Duties will include offering assistance and answering questions from attendees. This will last about two hours. Speakers will be the Gene and Cindy Rek along with Tim Sigmund.
    - c. ECRTMN Wildscape – it's ready for some volunteers to get to work preparing for spring.

IV. Board and department reports

- A. Liz Lewis, Vice-President: she is working on the schedule of speakers for the rest of the year.
- B. Mike Connor, Treasurer: Many people have paid their dues, but if you haven't, please do. We have \$7600+ in the bank, but there are party and new student expenses coming up. All is well and covered by the funds in the bank.
- C. Sue Ann Kendall, Secretary: Approve the December minutes and attachments. Move: Sandra Dworaczyk Second: Phyllis Shuffield. The motion passed. We need more blog posts, so send in your thoughts and observations. Sue Ann needs a substitute secretary for the February Chapter Meeting. Debbie Harris volunteered.
- D. Lisa Milewski, Membership:
  - a. Note that event organizers need to put the required information from the Program Office on demographics who attended. This is found at the bottom of their report. Only one person per event needs to complete this.
  - b. Achievements and milestones:
    - i. Linda Burgess, initial certification
    - ii. Michelle Lopez, Dorothy Mayer, and Kim Summers, 2022 recertification
    - iii. Linda Jo Conn, 2023 recertification
    - iv. Lisa Milewski 1000 hours milestone
  - c. If you need a new nametag, please let Lisa know, as she is ordering some soon. Please tell her how you would like your name to appear.
- E. Don Travis, Communication, Michelle Lopez, assistant
  - a. Suggestion from Mike Connor: we need a better sound system to hear speakers. Don Travis suggests using our old one. Don agreed to bring them out to the next meeting. Michelle Lopez will check the batteries.
  - b. We will also make PowerPoints displayed on the screen easier to see. Michelle will get the cable we need.
  - c. Send Janice Johnson anything you want to include in the weekly events email.
- F. Pamela Neeley, Advanced Training Coordinator: nothing to add
- G. Donna Lewis, Project Coordinator
  - a. Earth Day April 22 and the next weekend is May Day in Cameron, which we did last year. We need to decide which one to do. Discussion pointed out that we would get more "incidental" contacts at May Day, since people will be there for other reasons. However, the fact that there is an indoor area at

the Episcopal Church, which would make Earth Day easier on the Master Naturalists in case of bad weather.

- H. Kathy Lester, Student Training Coordinator, Alan Rudd, assistant
  - a. Twelve people are in the class that starts next week. They don't know if they'll be doing a potluck or not.
  - b. Would like people to sign up to be hosts during the class to help out with logistics. She passed around a sign-in sheet.
  - c. She will share the schedule of topics soon. (This was posted to the email list on January 13 and [added to the website](#).)
  - d. Classes start at 5:30, and will get rolling at 6. If you attend, be sure the students get to sit in the front.
  - e. Alan would like to do breakout sessions where existing members talk to them informally. This will be the meet and greet part. That will help students meet people with similar interests.
  - f. The February 2 meeting is where Clark W and some dynamic folks will come, so try to come to that.
  
- I. Catherine Johnson, Hostess and Wildscape coordinator – see III E above,
  
- J. Linda Jo Conn, State Representative/cheerleader
  - a. She shared the WOW! iNaturalist award, the same as last month of the Western diamondback rattlesnake observation by Marian Buegeler.
  - b. She then passed out participation awards for the most observations in 2022:
  - c. #1 Ann Collins @birdladymilam
  - d. #2 Sue Ann
  - e. #3 Michelle Lopez
  - f. #4 Eric Neubauer
  - g. #5 Carolyn Henderson
  - h. #6 Marian Buegeler
  - i. #7 Victoria St. John
  - j. #8 Dorothy Mayer
  - k. #9 Don Grigg
  - l. #10 Debra Sorenson
  - m. #11 Pamela
  - n. #12 Liz Lewis
  
- K. Janice Johnson emails the weekly newsletter listing all upcoming events. Contact Janice if you have one to add. It goes out on Sundays and as mentioned above, her email address is on the emails.
  
- V. Visitors: Tom and Susie Coose came with the Connors, Ellen Lucky from the new class attended, along with Randy Robinson attending one of his first meetings as a member of our

chapter.

VI. Old business

Please send photos to Donna Lewis of old activities. You can get things printed at CVS.

VII. New business

- a. Mike Conner brought up approval to help with improving their land to make trails and such, as well as do a June 3 training walk for Master Naturalists. Will get AT and VT when appropriate.
- b. Alan Rudd says that Prairies and Pines Land Trust may also have trails we could get to.
- c. The landowner conference was held last fall and Paul Crump said he was interested in working with people who have sandy soil that could be home to the Houston toad. He is also looking for people who want sound boxes on their land for the toads.

VIII. Adjourn 9pm

Move to adjourn: Sue Ann Kendall

Seconded: Pamela Neeley

1.25 hours AT at a Chapter Meeting for the speaker

1.25 hours VT for the meeting

1 hour Hospitality if you brought food



## Addendum: Clarification about New Project Permissions from Carolyn Henderson

There seems to be confusion over what requires permission. This is it:

Approval is needed by the board for **new** projects being sponsored by ECRTMN. This is only necessary if you are doing the project under the names of El Camino Real chapter Texas Master Naturalist or Texas Master Naturalist. It also requires AT/VS approval if you are seeking those hours.

So, if it's already on the list, you DO NOT need approval. If it isn't on the list, you DO need approval. The board's job is to make sure it fits the mission. The TMN state office requires that it's approved.

If you need funding, that also requires approval by the board.

I believe all of this is standard operating procedure.

I would also remind everyone that if it is a TMN state sponsored project, it is automatically approved in both participation and AT/VMS categories. No local action is needed. However, if you need money, that does require approval.

In summation, if the chapter has been doing it and it's on the list on VMS, no approval is needed. If it hasn't been done in the last several years or ever and it's not on the VMS list, it does require approval.

I hope this clarifies it for everyone. If you'd like to discuss it, you can call me.

I'm hoping all this means that many projects are in the works.