

El Camino Real chapter Texas Master Naturalist

Monthly Chapter Meeting 5:30 p.m.

November 9, 2023, All Saints Episcopal Church

I. Welcome

- A. Potluck – Thanksgiving theme for food. Many delicious items were prepared, and we are thankful for them.
- B. Speaker – Mary Ann Melton spoke on Lichens. We learned they are fascinating, varied symbiotic fungi/algae organisms, and that they glow under black light.

II. Meeting

- A. Project to plant native species at All Saints Episcopal Church (Carolyn Henderson)
 - a. The Board approved a project to help the church that hosts our meetings by selecting, purchasing, and planting a selection of native plants for a bed close to their fountain. We are forming a team to come up with a list of appropriate plants and will buy them at the wholesale nurseries our members have developed relationships with. We will not do daily maintenance but will replace or change out plants that die or don't thrive.
- B. Final meeting of year plans (Carolyn Henderson)
 - a. The December meeting will be a holiday celebration on December 14 at the smaller of the two Venue locations on Main Street in Cameron (across from the courthouse).
 - b. The event will be catered by Barbara Dominguez, who catered the party for our recent class.
 - c. Cost will be \$25, which can be given to Liz Lewis. Please let her know if you and any guests will be attending, so we will know how many to feed.
 - d. Bring your own alcohol, if desired.
 - e. Note that there will be an optional white elephant gift exchange. Please bring a wrapped gift (not expensive) with you if you want to participate.
- C. Vote on new elected officials – president, vice president, treasurer, secretary (Alan Rudd)
 - 1. The following slate of officers was presented and unanimously approved.
 - a. Carolyn Henderson, President
 - b. Liz Lewis, Vice President
 - c. Mike Conner, Treasurer
 - d. Sue Ann Kendall, Secretary
 - 2. Alan also listed all the new committee chairs/directors, and thanked those who are moving on to other duties:
 - a. Membership: Patricia Coombs – thanks to Lisa Milewski for her years of service
 - b. AT/VS Coordinator: Pamela Neeley
 - c. Nominating Committee and Student Training: Alan Rudd – thanks to Cathy for her work with the last two classes
 - d. Hospitality: Ellen Luckey – thanks to Catherine Johnson for her work
 - e. Communications: Michelle Lopez – thanks again to Don Travis
 - f. Publicity: Linda Burgess (new position)
 - g. State Representative and iNaturalist Cheerleader: Linda Jo Conn
 - h. Thanks to Donna Lewis for her years of service on the board as well.

- D. 2024 Dues are \$30. Please send checks made out to ECRTMN (El Camino Real Texas Master Naturalist) to Mike Conner, treasurer. His information is listed on our website. You can take clear photos of your checks and text them to 512-740-8702, as well.
- E. 2023 Recertification hours need to be done by December 31. Enter them ASAP.

III. Board and Department reports

- A. Liz Lewis, VP: There is no speaker for December. She has a list of speakers for 2024.
- B. Mike Conner, Treasurer: The bank balance is a little over \$5,000 (reported by email)
- C. Sue Ann Kendall, Secretary: Kim Summers moved to approve the October minutes. Jackie Thornton seconded. The motion passed. Sue Ann invited members to send blog submissions in email, personal mail, courier pigeon or however you'd like to get them to her. Many thanks to all our prolific bloggers!
- D. Lisa Milewski, membership (reported by email)
Recertifications:
 - 1) Cindy Bolch (she says she already reached this milestone)
 - 2) Victoria Everett
 - 3) Liz Lewis
 - 4) Kim SummersMilestones (gold dragonfly pin):
 - 1) Sue Ann Kendall – 1000 hours
 - 2) Eric Neubauer – 1000 hours
- E. Don Travis, Communications: Don noted that this was his last meeting as a Chapter officer, having been with the group since its inception. We are very grateful for all his help and very hard work with the website and media for meetings.
- F. Pamela Neeley, AT and VS Authorizations: Volunteer Service authorizations are now also done by Pamela. Contact her if you need approval.
- G. Donna Lewis, Project Coordinator: we will not fill this position after Donna's term ends. Members are charged with developing their own projects and running them by Pamela Neeley to be sure they are appropriate.
- H. Alan Rudd, Student Training: still planning for a class in 2025, but very happy to see members of the public attending the meetings.
- I. Linda Jo Conn, iNaturalist Coordinator and State Cheerleader: She shared some funny photos of Sam Kieschnick investigating pocket gophers at the Annual Meeting. She noted that there are two species of pocket gopher in the area. South of the Little River it's the Plains Atwater gopher. The rest of us don't know what we have.
- J. Catherine Johnson, hostess and Wildscape coordinator: Wildscape Nature Days continue each Saturday in November from 10-2. Members are invited to staff the event. As this is Catherine's last meeting as hostess, she plans to use her time to have more activities for the public at the Wildscape from now on.

IV. Old business: none

V. New business

- a. We were happy to welcome two visitors to the meeting, Robert Mueck and Brenda Croomer.
- b. Dale Kruse was also at the meeting. He proposed a new project to gather examples of all the vascular plants, bryophytes, and lichen in Milam County. This is called a floristic inventory. He needs volunteers with property of different kinds to gather plants in. He also needs people to help

gather then plants and put them in presses in the field. More information about this project will be shared through the weekly email for our group (Thanks to Janice Johnson for this.)

VI. Adjourn: Sue Ann Kendall moved to adjourn, and Kim Summers seconded. Adjourned at 8 pm.
Meeting: 1 hour VS at a Chapter Meeting; 1 hour Admin, Hospitality if you brought food
Presentation: 1 hour AT Chapter Meeting

Submitted by Sue Ann Kendall, Chapter Secretary

