

FALL FESTIVAL WAS A SUCCESS!



Photo courtesy Judi Elliott

At Elm Fork Chapter booth there were big sticks in the box on the left, and on the right, smaller ones in the iron holder that Don Fikes loaned us. Approximately 25 members made 96 sticks. Super Ray made several really good looking Peterson bluebird boxes. Our workers were: Jan Deatherage, Ray Kreutzfeld, Irene Hansen, Sharon Clark and Kris Robinson. We also had help from Larry Legg and Denise Remfert of the 2015 class. Jan Deatherage prepared the professional-looking signage for the booth. Sales totaled \$520!

*Information from Judi Elliott*



Take notes

Meet your . . .

**HOSPITALITY  
CHAIR, LINDA COX**



When I joined Elm Fork Chapter of the Texas Master Naturalists program, I was still working full time as a hospital nurse, and I knew that arranging time off to participate in projects would be difficult. What wasn't difficult was to schedule every third Thursday off to attend the monthly meetings. By coming early to help set up, and staying late to help with the clean up, I managed to turn one hour of service into two. It wasn't long before I was recruited to head up the loosely organized hospitality committee.

Besides making sure there is coffee and refreshments for the meetings, and attending board meetings, my duties include purchasing supplies as needed and transporting them to and from the meetings. Twice a year, when the chapter has Open House, and the Christmas party my responsibilities are more complex, and I have to recruit more help to get together the great parties we expect for those occasions.

My father was a native Texan and it was from him I learned my love of nature and appreciation of undisturbed natural habitat. My mother was a New Yorker, and always the party organizer, so I give her credit for the skills needed as hospitality chair.

My childhood was spent with winters on Long Island (New York) and summers in East Texas. When I was twelve the family settled in Carrollton, Texas, and, except for brief adventures in New Mexico, Colorado, and Utah, I have been in the Denton County area ever since.

I really love working on all of the projects with the Master Naturalists, teaching children about the importance of the natural world and actually getting to help them explore it at Clear Creek, telling people about our program at booths and community events, restoring natural areas, and helping landowners learn what they can do with their property to encourage wildlife and native plants.

Linda is of the class of 2005

## *Mother Nature Takes a Rest*

*By Bob Ross*



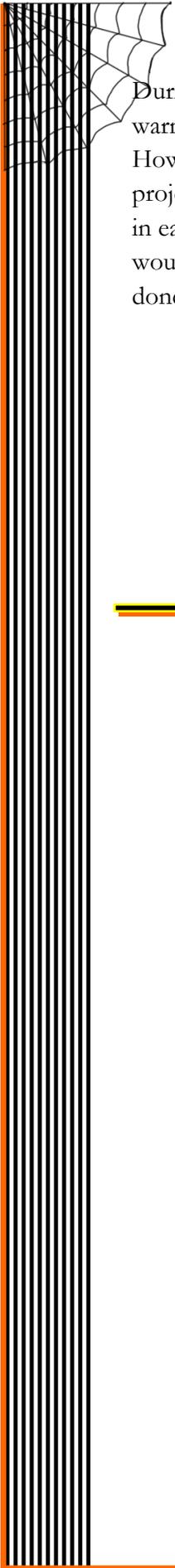
**W**e, residents of the Northern Hemisphere, recently celebrated the Autumnal Equinox, the first day of fall. For North Texans, it happened at 3:22 a.m. CDT on September 23<sup>rd</sup>. Our Equinoxes are when the sun shines directly on the equator and the length of day and night is nearly equal. The season we call fall was once referred to as “*harvest*” to reflect that time of year when farmers gathered their crops for winter storage.

Fall is the first sign of Mother Nature beginning to take a much needed rest. She has been bountiful with her flora and fauna during the spring and summer months. She has given us the beauty and excitement of a vast array of flowers and plants. We have watched varieties of young babies being born and growing enough to prepare for the harshness of winter. Mother Nature illustrated her ability to give us a drought and then we understood the adage “*it takes a flood to end a drought.*” We had both in the past year.

Humans are beginning to get in the mode of resting with the onset of fall. Humans have a factual history and fictional lore of how to prepare for their rest during the fall months. One of the most anticipated holidays, happening the end of October each year, is Halloween. Some believe Halloween has pagan roots, others think it derived from Christian roots. It began as the ancient Celtic festival of Samhain (pronounced sah’ win) which marked the end of the harvest and the beginning of winter, when the Celts believed spirits of the dead returned to earth. The word Halloween is shortened from the phrase “All-Hallow-Evening”, the eve of All Hallows Day, which is now known as All Saints Day.

In a fun way, we continue the Celt ritual and tradition of spirits of the dead returning to earth. How, you might ask? Celts believed the spirits of the dead returned and walked the streets of the living. Therefore, the living would dress in costume to blend in with the spirits so to not be noticeable and get nabbed by the spirits when the spirits left the earth. So, at the end of the month when you have all those scary and frightening ghouls and goblins knocking at your door for candy, you will understand the origins.

As a member of Elm Fork Chapter it is time for you take a rest. You have given of your time, efforts, talents and knowledge to establish, grow and promote our ideas and projects of Texas Master Naturalists. It has been a very good year for our chapter. We have a very strong and active membership, with an additional 27 more in training. Good luck and welcome aboard to the Class of 2015.

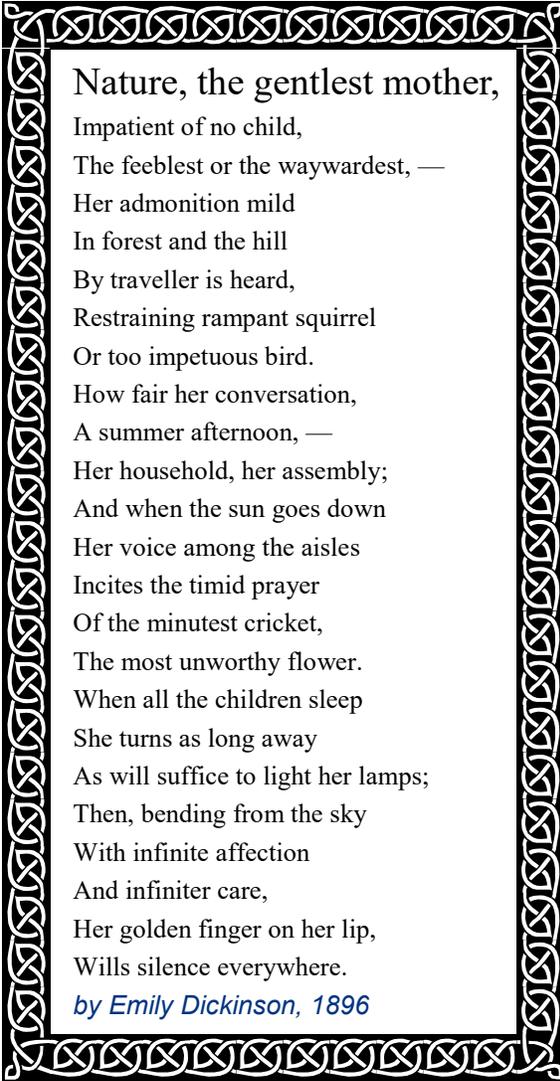


During the fall and winter months we will rest, hopefully in a rocking chair and drinking our favorite warm beverages. We will recall what we have done during the hectic months of spring and summer. However, we must not sit on our laurels. Take this down time to review, and plan ahead, as to what projects, tactics and implementations you want to pursue in the future. Our editor diligently records in each *Naturalist* newsletter our chapter's mission and vision. Many of us just scan them. This would be a good time to review them and decide what we have done in the past and what needs to be done in the future to fulfill our stated mission and vision.

***Our Mission:*** to develop a corps of well-informed volunteers who provide education, outreach, and service dedicated to the beneficial management of natural resources and natural areas within our community.

***Our Vision:*** in our community, Elm Fork Chapter of the Texas Master Naturalist program, will be recognized as a primary source of information, education and service to support natural resources and natural areas today and in the future.

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Nature, the gentlest mother,  
Impatient of no child,  
The feeblest or the waywardest, —  
Her admonition mild  
In forest and the hill  
By traveller is heard,  
Restraining rampant squirrel  
Or too impetuous bird.  
How fair her conversation,  
A summer afternoon, —  
Her household, her assembly;  
And when the sun goes down  
Her voice among the aisles  
Incites the timid prayer  
Of the minutest cricket,  
The most unworthy flower.  
When all the children sleep  
She turns as long away  
As will suffice to light her lamps;  
Then, bending from the sky  
With infinite affection  
And infiniter care,  
Her golden finger on her lip,  
Wills silence everywhere.

*by Emily Dickinson, 1896*