

TMN-Gideon Lincecum Chapter Meeting

November 12, 2011

Winedale Historic Center

Winedale, TX

Minutes

The meeting was called to order at 9:15 A.M. by President Cindy Rodibaugh. The minutes from the last meeting on September 17th had been distributed via email. No corrections were noted. A motion was made and seconded to approve the September 17th minutes as submitted. The motion carried unanimously.

Executive Committee Reports:

President---Cindy Rodibaugh Thanks to Jerry Frazier and Carol Montgomery for the bird houses they donated to the Lone Star Water Forum in September as door prizes. Cindy put together a basket of printed information with a copy of the book, *Bringing Nature Home* by Douglas Tallamy. The main theme of this years program was rainwater harvesting and Scott Schaeffer, from Water Savers in LaGrange, donated a complete system for the fund raising auction. The highest bidder has donated the system to Brenham High School and Scott will install it on a greenhouse behind the high school which our chapter has been given the keys to. It was noted that this year's water forum was a good program.

Cindy gave a report on her attendance at the Annual Statewide meeting. The Director of Cibolo Nature Center gave a great presentation. Cindy was amazed at the money involved in some of the chapters. Many have hundreds of thousands in grants which we don't have. But she felt we can still be very effective in our projects like the green house at the Brenham Schools and our other very worthwhile local projects. Cindy also enjoyed the biography of Aldo Leopold which was presented. His approach is similar to Bamberger's Ranch only better. Aldo started in forestry work and then went back to a more natural approach. He turned his land into a great learning center. If we could get this program Cindy felt it would be wonderful to offer for one of our educational programs here. Margaret Lamar reported how she was struck by his commitment to restoring his small bit of land. You don't have to have thousands of acres and she felt this would apply to so many of our members and to so many in our communities. How he returned it to health from something completely barren was very inspiring. He also involved his neighbors. Margaret added that this inspired her to take the long term view on her own land. She said she realized what I do is not just for me but for my children's grandchildren. The generations to come really can benefit from what we do. Margaret agreed that this would be a great program for us to offer here if we can get the movie and materials.

Cindy spent a full day with the Texas Stream team, learning how to monitor water quality. She found this very interesting but high tech chemistry! She brought fliers from some of the projects to share with us. Cindy reported that it was fun to see the creativeness of many of the projects. She hopes many of our members will go next year. As an added extra she reported when she came home she found a Northern flicker woodpecker in her birdbath and also had a big cloud of monarch's feeding on the gayfeather flowers.

Cindy had high praise for Margaret's program given at the Statewide meeting. She reported that another woman talked of setting up a speaker program at her local library and doing book reviews as a way of involving local people in their chapters. It was highly recommended to use libraries as they are good community gathering places in today's world. Cindy brought and displayed some good books for children. She encouraged us to think of libraries as good recruiting places. One of the chapters sponsored a bookstore at the gathering and Cindy found good books and bandannas with bugs info on them, a Bug Bingo, and other cute ideas for games.

The Sunday speaker at Statewide was the Director of The Nature Conservancy who talked about the state of nature programs and ideas for setting aside reserves, etc. She discussed how the NC helps with this.

Cindy brought a couple birdhouses from the Fowl Party at Nails Creek Park and some handouts but was disappointed at the attendance at the Fowl Party. Our Master Naturalist members were the only ones who showed up at Nail's creek for this event and it is questionable if we should continue it.

Vice President—Art Wammel was not in attendance and did not send in a report.

Treasurer—Tom Yates reported we have a current balance of \$7146.73. Of that the amount budgeted but not spent is \$3786.21. So we have \$3360 in unallocated money.

The 2012 dues list has been started. Six members have paid double and will be emailed so they won't pay twice again.

In other discussion of funding, Dave Redden has requested another Exxon Mobil Volunteer grant and they have approved a \$2000 grant for next year.

Activity Committee Reports:

Training: Toni Platt reported we still do not have a definite meeting place for next year's training. Winedale is available, but we're in the works with the Blinn complex. However, if they cannot commit to letting us in and then having someone to do the closing up by 15th November then we will have classes at Winedale. If we work something out with Blinn we might have meetings and socials there and look for classes there next year.

Toni has not contacted five speakers as she needs to know exactly where we'll have our class. She also reported that Pond Management and Rangeland are two difficult spots to fill. The rest of the speakers we've had for quite a while and they are good. Some suggestions were made of people to do those two presentations. It was also discussed that maybe we should reconsider times, meet for training year round and have block Saturday speakers. Some other groups do this and it seems to work well. The late night meetings and long drives may be more of a problem for many. Block classes will be considered. Where it is all day Saturdays for two days that can be exhausting on the one hand but also it may be easier to get people to commit rather than long term of classes as we are doing now.

Tom Yates had a question for how to do the yearly budget since we're already spending money now for next year's classes. Do we buy items we need in January or December? It was decided that Cindy and Tom will get together with Larry to see how this has been done in the past. They will also meet for this year's audit.

Recruiting: Judith Deaton reported 49 new signup prospects. Five are from 2011. For the 2012 class so far she has five definite, two no's and one former MN that wants to recertify. None have completed the application with payment. She discussed the need to set a deadline for sign-ups. It was also discussed that our attempts to contact the communities around us are not getting much feedback. It was discussed to create a form/pamphlet that sets objectives, and more clearly states questions and answers such as what we do, why us? It was felt that information which reports on projects we have done would also be helpful. Then we could also provide potential new members more details such as the schedule and what they will be learning when asked to sign up.

Membership: Carol Daniels sent an emailed report to Cindy:

GLC Membership Committee Report 11-12-2011

The following members have recertified for 2011:

Carol Paulson

Butch Young

No other milestones

Third quarter volunteer hours: 415.25

Third quarter AT hours 153.5

Year to date volunteer hours 2487.5

Year to date AT hours 638.75

Newsletter: Carol Paulson hopes to get one out after the Christmas party and definitely before the end of the year.

Advanced Training: Dave Redden was not at the meeting. There was some discussion that Dave reported last time that the webinars are approved for AT. Some members might need more instructions re firewall settings to log on to the seminars. It was also discussed **that the Coastal Prairie** Partnership is very active and members were encouraged to check out the **website** at <http://www.coastalprairie.org/>. The Coastal Prairie partnership is free to join.

Later in the meeting it was noted that you can revisit any of the new member training classes one time and it still counts as AT.

Washington County Wildlife Assoc. is sponsoring a workday December 9th and this was recommended by several members. There is a \$10 charge.

While not qualifying for AT, it was noted that Chapel Hill Garden Club is sponsoring a speaker on Thursday January 19th, and it was decided to put highly recommended program on the website. Heide, who is a wholesale grower, will be offering the program and tickets are \$10. Others who have attended found it a great program. There is a 6 p.m. social and a program at 7.

Social: Luan Yarnold reported that our holiday party will be held Friday, December 9th at St. John's UCC family hall in Burton on 516 North Colorado Street. Those who want to help decorate please come at 5 p.m.; 6 p.m. is the social and 6:30 the meal. This is Wes Davenport's church and BYOB is approved but please wine only. The Chapter will furnish ham, turkey, tea and coffee. Members are asked to bring salads, veggies, desserts, and nature related door prizes to share. It was discussed that this would be announced on the website, in the newsletter, and Cindy would place announcements in local papers and distribute it to our email list. The County Agent will get it in the local papers.

Website: No report

Top Ten: Carol Paulson reported on Top Ten Projects. Currently there is nothing in the works and we will not do Top Ten at the Christmas Party. It was suggested that we try to have Top Ten at the end of our February Social so that we could involve the new class.

Volunteer Service Projects:

Volunteer Service Projects: Cindy reported that we have been approved for the adopt a highway project and the sign should go up mid-November. Cindy will chair this group.

Four times a year you schedule a clean-up and they provide the bags, signs, and info for a training session required prior to the clean-up. This will be a good time to do other things also such as work on ID's for grasses, etc. while we're removing the trash. Our site is West of Rutersville almost to the Jersey barnyard.

Greenhouse project already covered.

Publicity: Mary Jones will head our efforts to writing articles for Newspaper. There was no other new information at this time.

Active projects:

Judith Deaton reported on the developing identification of invasive plants project at Festival Hill walking trails. Posting a picture of each species is planned so people can see and learn what they are. Information on what animals use the plant for, etc. would be included. It was discussed that a short t-post would be ideal for this as it would be not too low to the ground so it could be readable. We need to determine how many invasive plants will be so highlighted so we can budget for posts.

At Indian Creek, Carol Montgomery reported Brandon Dillingham is the leader on this project and that this time of year is the best time to be working on the trail. The trail has been cleaned and mulch has been added. Bluebird houses are being monitored, but are dormant for now of course.

Margaret Lamar reported on the Brenham school project. She said it is really exciting as teachers were nervous about taking their children outdoors, especially the first grade teachers. She said it is perhaps not in their nature to be outside with the children, so it's great to see it going from being nervous to the teachers being very excited. All 1st grade students are to be involved. This will be 7 classes or 147 first graders! The teachers are coming to life, really excited, seeing how it works, that there is good structure to the program. The gazebo provided a good opportunity to gather the students to learn. It seats 25-30 people and has worked well as a central component to teacher comfort and for students to feel organized. Storytelling and learning takes place at the gazebo and then students go out to the working space from there. So far it has been very successful. Kids have planted all kinds of stuff and it survived the drought thanks to an irrigation system which was donated. Earth Society and Blue Bonnet Garden Club, and now we as the Master Naturalists have been very involved and the school is working at long range plans for sustainability. If possible they want the kids to be together in the 5th grade from all the schools and to involve high school students in mentoring and learning to be master naturalists through this. A lot going on!

Houston Toad Project: Some pond water has been tested. Toni Platt reported on a new Fund raiser: a t-shirt with the Houston Toad on it which costs \$15 and all money goes to

Houston Toad projects. The Houston Toad trunk loan program was also discussed. This is a trunk that has amphibian calls, visual aids, frog and toad skeletons, posters, puppets, teaching aids etc. and can go on loan to any group wanting to learn about the Houston Toad. There was discussion about using this to put on a program as the contents would be good for both children and adults. It was mentioned that TP&W has a lot of trunks on various animals and natural subjects. Using the would be the sort of thing that would go great in a library program and help get us further publicity and public education.

We have quite a few bluebird and other bird boxes and Jerry volunteered to continue to provide the boxes that can be given away whenever you have programs. Several phases of the bluebird projects are being done. Jim Weatherly and Dave Redden are working at the school volunteering at two classes, helping with introduction to science and other projects.

There was some discussion of guest speakers. Cindy is recruiting some and will get it in the papers, etc. when we have programs. A suggestion was made to contact the biologists for Ducks Unlimited and invite them to come as speakers. For example there are Wood duck boxes at the power plant, but we don't know who is doing those. Several other speakers were suggested by attendees, including the local Sierra Club president, who is an ecologist. The Austin Butterfly Forum was highly recommended. Some tentative suggestions for our future programs were:

January-- Trees and aquifers

March-- Climate change and prairie chickens

May-- Birds and flowers Ducks Unlimited? Birds? Prairie blossoming? Pocket prairie? Dr. Feinbach as speaker?

There will be no meeting in July

Our next meeting will be Saturday January 21st.

Adjourn A motion was made and seconded to adjourn. Motion carried.

Meeting was adjourned at 11:00 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lemae Higgs, Secretary