

TMN-Gideon Lincecum Chapter Meeting

January 21, 2012

Winedale Historic Center-- *MEADOWS CONFERENCE ROOM*

Winedale, TX

The meeting was called to order at 9:03 A.M. by President Cindy Rodibaugh. The minutes from the November 19, 2011 meeting and the December 9, 2011 meetings had been distributed via email. No corrections were noted. A motion was made by Carol Daniels and seconded by Margaret Lamar to accept the minutes as submitted. The motion carried unanimously.

A Winedale security guard spoke to us briefly reminding us that if you do have a medical emergency call 911 first as ambulance response time is very long so far out in the country. Then find local security as they do have emergency training and defibrulators, etc. All visitors, including us, should park on the outside of the road not inside as you will get stuck and they are not allowed to pull you out. A tow truck would have to be called. The security representative said they are happy to host us and wished us a good day at Winedale!

Executive Committee Reports:

President—Cindy Rodibaugh Cindy welcomed and introduced the chapter officers for 2012. Cindy Rodibaugh is again serving as President, Lemae Higgs as Secretary, and welcomed new officers Margaret Lamar as Vice-President, and Carol Daniels as Treasurer.

Cindy encouraged everyone to enroll on the State MN list to get announcements from Michelle Haggerty. Any volunteer or AT events listed there are already approved even if they do not come from our local chapter. She reminded everyone that there are several good opportunities for AT and volunteer hours listed there.

Cindy reported that we should each review our organization Mission Statement. She also said it was great to see several respond to the L.A.N.D.S. Program with the Brenham Junior High at Kerr Farm on January 10th. This qualified for volunteer hours. AT hours were available at the Post-Wildfire Seminar at McKinney Roughs Nature Center on January 13th. Cindy will continue to broadcast volunteer and AT opportunities but again encouraged all to get on the State list serve, Katy Prairie Conservancy, Coastal Prairie Partners, Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center, and other local Wildlife groups and your county AgriLife newsletters to find great activities that you can get excited about.

Cindy thanked Dave Redden for reporting his volunteer hours to Exxon Mobile Volunteer Grant employee program, which resulted in us getting a \$2000 grant.

Vice President—Margaret Lamar Margaret encouraged anyone having ideas for making the chapter more fruitful and prosperous to submit them to her and they will be investigated. Margaret is looking at how to increase the education experience for the new class and how to get people from the new class to really invest in the chapter.

Treasurer—Carol Daniels reported a current balance of \$9832.06. Carol met with last year's treasurer, Tom Yates but they don't have budget items yet completed to go over. We will discuss the budget at the next meeting. Cindy asked all committee chairpersons to prepare a budget for anticipated expenditures and submit it prior to Feb. 18, 2012 to be considered in the total budget.

Introduction committee leaders Cindy introduced the following committee leaders for 2012: Prairie Committee: Belinda Weatherly; Bluebird Trail at Winedale: Jim Weatherly; Recruiting: Judy Deaton; Training: Toni Platt; Membership: Carol Daniels; Advanced Training: Dave Redden; Programs: Debbie Copeland, Gene Luhn, and Margaret Lamar; Newsletter: Carol Paulson; Social: Janet Jarrell; and Volunteer Service Projects: Ed Koslosky.

Cindy noted if you have a project you think can qualify for volunteer hours, please review the guidelines, complete the Volunteer Activity Request Form found on the website and send it to Ed. If your project is approved it will be assigned a reporting code number.

Bluebird Trail—Jim Weatherly reported that it is time to clean and repair Bluebird houses. Cindy reminded us that we have a Bluebird trail here at Winedale with 11 houses.

Prairie Committee—Belinda Weatherly at: BelindaWeatherly@aol.com Their first meeting is February 11th at 9 a.m. at Belinda's house. If interested please RSVP Belinda. Emails have been sent to all who indicated interest in the past. You don't have to make the first meeting to be part of the group. There will also be opportunities for ad hoc groups to volunteer. First Belinda wants to look at where we think we should be in restoration in the five counties, where we are now, and the difference between those two. Then the committee will work on strategic long range goals. Belinda hopes to set up a roadmap for future volunteers as a long range plan we can take forward as a chapter no matter who is in place as the committee leader. That way it should be easier for new people to take on responsibility as they won't have to start from scratch.

Recruiting: Judy Deaton, Debbie Copeland, and Carol Daniels have been busy here. Hopefully we will have a full class if all comes off. Judy has worked out a way to

make a picture roster email with all our photos which should be of great use to both new and old members.

Training: Toni Platt reported all speakers are set up except rangeland on the 25th of March. All five county extension agents have been contacted. Everything is going smoothly to start the new training session. Orientation will be at Winedale on February 4th from 9 to 1. Toni will do the agenda for that. We have speakers we've never had before and some are really good. Current members are encouraged to attend as there should be a lot of new things to learn. Attending a topic session a second time can also count as AT hours.

Membership: Carol Daniels reported that everyone should have received an email confirming if you have paid your dues. If not please do so now!

Seven members initially certified in 2011, and 32 members have recertified! Debbie Copeland; Carol Daniels; Bill Deaton; Larry Doherty; and Susan Solari have received 250 hours recognition. Cindy Rodibaugh and Jim Weatherly have received 500 hours recognition. Our chapter reported 3897 volunteer hours for 2011 and 923 AT hours. There were so many certifications that we don't have enough pins! So some will get their pins next month! Carol reports that as being a wonderful problem to have! Total Volunteer hours since inception for the chapter is 18,103 with 4215 hours of AT. GLC had direct impact with 894 individuals at 16 events and indirect outreach with 490 at 6 events. Our projects impacted 122 acres of land. This is something to be proud of!

Carol encouraged keeping accurate records on one sheet and add to it as you complete new hours. She also recommended a cumulative folder of the sheets as helpful. Carol doesn't print things quarterly so it helps if she can print everything at the end of the year on one sheet. She asks us to skip a line at the end of each quarter or draw a line under that quarter and then do a yearly total as a clearer way of submitting our data. Carol thanks everyone for getting hours in on time this year. Ed Koslosky, Cindy Rodibaugh, and Carol Daniels met and revised the code list to make it simpler. It is posted on the website under the volunteer section. Divided into seven categories it should be easier to follow and most of our current sites are listed. If you are working on the planning of a project that is one category, for example, while a shovel in your hand is another category i.e. volunteer. The revised code lists 7 categories: Education; Nature Sites; Prescribed Burning Activity; Chapter Management; Projects with Associated Organizations; Citizen Science; and Other. Please review the codes – designed to make it easier to create a log to help report volunteer hours.

Advanced Training: Dave Redden reports that Webinars are approved for AT hours, but it is preferred that you do not get ALL of your AT hours from the web. We want to encourage attendance for our speakers also. Dave reported that the Webinars

speakers are well prepared and often the top experts in the State on their subject. This is a very efficient way to get information from field experts. Especially for the first time you use the system, be sure and sign up ahead of time to log in more easily. Feedback from Tom Yates was that he found it a very GOOD hour! Dave reported that the Wildlife Association also offers good seminars.

If you think we should video record current class presentations please let Dave know. We do have copies of past year's classes available in the library for brush ups on a topic or more information on topics of interest. Cindy suggested maybe she needs to bring them along to meetings for easier checkout by members. Those present were reminded that you can learn a lot by joining in on some of the wildlife sessions. In that way we could also be mutually supporting of each other's groups.

Programs: Debbie Copeland organized today's program. The next meeting's program on March 17th will be on habitat and what you need to do on your property to help out different birds and migration. It was suggested that if you attend other programs, such as ones on wildlife, be sure to meet and talk to the speakers as that helps us to bring in more speakers. Winedale and Round Top can also be a draw as speakers are interesting in what is going on here. A&M faculty is developing a groundwater speakers group. We still need Sept. and Nov. programs. Cindy suggested we meet in June for a movie night and show *Green Fire* based on Aldo Leopold's life. Or we could have the public invited for a project day and set up displays of current projects. Please let us know if you have a speaker you have liked. Margaret Lamar suggested potential field trip/gatherings for the chapter. If you have ideas, please turn in suggestions to her. Maybe we could rent a bus and go somewhere locally interesting? This might not be a program activity as such but a chapter activity. The Parkers talked about their wood ducks and it was suggested that on April 14-15th the Atwater Prairie Chickens are booming. Either of those venues might be a nice outing.

Review of activity on currently active projects:

Greenhouse project at Brenham high school—Charlotte von Rosenberg reported that they have to get the mister and other parts working. They need seeds of native grasses and in April are going to need loamy soil to get trays with seeds going. Volunteer workdays will be scheduled for this. If you have mud from dry tanks, that is extremely rich and good for their projects.

Invasive Plant identification at Festival Hill—Judith Deaton reported on the sign for Festival Hill as you enter the garden area. They have two estimates on costs and are planning signs to put in front of each invasive listed. This should be 12-15 signs depending on what they find. They want to label one of each kind of invasive. A schedule for workdays will be posted on the website. A workshop to help people learn

more about invasives is being considered. The local newspaper has been very helpful, and they wondered about a thank you to be sent to them for their help?

Adopt a Highway—Elisa Henderson. Cindy took a picture of our sign, which went up on Thursday West of Ruttersville on Hwy. 159 towards La Grange. A work day is planned for January 28th and all workers are encouraged to purchase pick-up levers. All have to watch a 7 minute video from the Highway Department before participating. A First Aid kit will be provided but be aware of poison oak and ivy, dress appropriately with heavy shoes, long pants, no shorts, etc. and be aware this is not a clean job! The county has not mowed the road and the surface is steeply sloped!

Brenham Elementary Gardens – Margaret Lamar reported seven teachers on board, good discussions, modeling, and lots of people helping. The first graders seem to be learning a lot and are enthusiastic. Teachers have a spring schedule, a planting day, and are taking initiative in the project. Learning and training and increased use of the outdoor area is very positive for students, teachers, and helpers. They have been coordinating with Master Gardeners but would like more Master Naturalists involvement with planning for planting day, etc. Margaret needs contacts for helpers in this area. Children in nature collaboration across 24 counties are now a part of her busy job. In a time of budget cuts volunteers are very important and one of the topics is how can we motivate MN's to be support systems for schools? There is enthusiasm for a separate strand of story tellers, ones who cover the history and stories of our land. Jaime Gonzales, Prairie Restoration is spearheading that project.

Brenham Elementary Bluebird Education—Susan Solari not present.

Newsletter—Carol Paulson was thanked for an excellent job!

Top Ten: Evening—A pot luck is planned for February 18th in the evening with time and place to be announced. Two top ten presentations are available. If we put it in the training schedule it will be a good opportunity for new folks to meet us.

Volunteer Service Projects: Ed could not be here today so Cindy reported that on the website there is a form for you to describe what your project is and to get it to Ed to get it approved. New code list is on website.

Sign-up sheets were put out for Adopt a Highway and other projects so we can send out announcements to those interested. The more you have volunteering on these sorts of projects, the more fun it is and quicker you will be done!

Art Wammel expressed interest in Wild Turkey reintroduced in this area, but you have to have large amounts of land to release and also approval of Texas Parks and Wildlife. Chapel Hill Chamber of Commerce is spearheading this, investigating why they

have disappeared, what has changed, and can we get them back? This is a very interesting topic and anyone who would like to be involved please contact Art. A quail corridor is also being developed.

Madeline Johnson was thanked for putting the new class application form on the website.

A system of online payment has been researched but is not cost effective for our small numbers.

Several upcoming workshops were announced.

Our next meeting will be Saturday March 17th.

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

Meeting was adjourned at 10:52 a.m.

Respectfully submitted, Lemae Higgs, Secretary