

**Texas Master Naturalist – Hill Country Chapter  
Board Meeting  
November 19, 2007**

**REVIEW OF ACTION ITEM STATUS:**

**June - Action Item C:** Check into how to list our chapter meetings in the Kerrville Daily Times Club & Organization Meeting Calendar – **Donna Snow Robinson - Completed**

**July - Action Item C.** Communications Director Donna Robinson volunteered to edit volunteer project descriptions for use on our website. Please submit projects to her by the end of August. - **Donna Robinson - In progress:** Donna has received 3 volunteer project descriptions so far which have been published in the Chapter newsletter. None have been posted on our website to date.

**July - Action Item E.** Provide information to Donna Robinson on the building of the accessible trail for our September newsletter – **John Huecksteadt - Completed**

**October Action Item:** Obtain information on ordering more Chapter T-shirts. – **Marilyn Murrmann - In progress**

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**NOVEMBER 2007 Board Meeting**

**Present:**

Dan Behringer, Cathy Downs, Betty Gardner, John Huecksteadt, Marilyn Murrmann, Phyllis Muska, Donna Snow Robinson, Jim Stanley, Priscilla Stanley,

**Absent:** Bill Perkison, Jerri Workman

The November meeting was called to order at 2:00 PM by President Phyllis Muska. The Board meeting was held two days earlier than usual to avoid meeting the day before Thanksgiving.

**1. October Chapter meeting approved as Advanced Training:** The **October 22nd** meeting was “**Priority Hill Country Native Plant Conservation**” by Jan Wrede, Education Director at Cibolo Nature Center, on the need to plant certain native woody plants that are becoming uncommon due to overbrowsing by deer and exotic ungulates. She indicated that these plants need to be protected inside exclosures and that a property owner might consider managing the number of deer and exotics by hunting, if allowed, to benefit the habitat. Communications Director Donna Snow Robinson moved that this program be approved as Advanced Training for members who attended. Membership Director John Huecksteadt seconded the motion, which carried.

**2. A New Committee to come up with helpful guidelines for future Class Planning Committees:** Class Planning Director Cathy Downs recognized the need to have a guidance document available for the New Class Planning Committee on all the tasks that needed to be done, how they had been accomplished in the past, what had, and had not, worked well in the past, suggested speakers etc. This Class Planning Guideline Committee will include current and former Class Managers and Class Planning Directors. Cathy has scheduled three meetings for the committee to be held on November 30, and December 7 and 14 for a total of eight hours. These meetings will be held at Schreiner University.

**3. Expansion of Volunteer Project at Camp CAMP:** Our members Cathy Downs, Bob Tanner and Colleen Everson have been volunteering at Camp C.A.M.P (**C**hildren **A**ttaining **M**aximum **P**otential) in Center Point for several years. This is a 55 acre facility on the Guadalupe River that has operated for 20 years as a camp and respite facility for special needs children, which provides one staff member for each camper. The Camp, a 501(c)(3) organization, is now beginning a 5 to 10 year growth plan. Our TMNs have been working on getting a \$500 grant from a nature education organization to build an expanded Nature Center, since the children currently only have access to some caged animals for nature study. This expanded facility would have accessible Hill Country native plants in raised-bed gardens for

butterflies and hummingbirds and an accessible bird blind. While Bob and Colleen are employed at the camp, this work has been done as volunteers during their non-working hours.

In November, eight TMN Land Management Assistance Program volunteers surveyed the areas of the Camp to be impacted by the facility growth plan for native and exotic plants and provided written reports to Camp CAMP on their observations. Some riparian and wooded areas had excellent communities of native plants, including a madrone and young Spanish oaks.

Cathy asked if working on this grant application to a nature education organization would be considered a TMN Volunteer Project. The Board agreed that this effort would be part of this Volunteer Project. Additional proposed projects include habitat restoration, plant rescue from the areas where new buildings will be built, and removal of invasive plants. Thus, work on the grant application and making the proposed improvements in the nature center area would meet the requirements to be an approved TMN Volunteer Project.

Cathy asked if this would need to be a new project since it was outside the bounds of the current project description for KR-07-A "Teach/create Nature-based programs to/for disabled children". The Board decided that it would be preferable to update the description of the current project at Camp CAMP rather than to create an additional project.

#### **4. Chapter website Update:**

Membership Director John Huecksteadt recommended that our Chapter have a basic skeletal Grovesite website (which is made available via the State TMN office) which will point to our main website at [www.hillcountrymasternaturalist.org](http://www.hillcountrymasternaturalist.org). John determined that this approach is common among the larger TMN chapters.

The State TMN office is providing on-line classes in the use of Grovesite at both the beginner and advanced level. Our members Julie Gibson, Kim Whitaker (our current webmaster), and John Huecksteadt will participate in these classes.

**5. Potential Volunteer Project at Lyndon B. Johnson State Park & Historic Site:** John Huecksteadt indicated that Charlie Randall, a member of our Class of 2007, has been volunteering at this Park in the Living History re-enactment at the Sauer-Beckman Farmstead. She is now interested in giving guided nature hikes at this TPWD State Park, and wanted to know if this was a possible TMN Volunteer Project. The Board agreed that guiding nature hikes involved nature education which qualifies as a TMN Volunteer Project.

Charlie also wanted to know if she could wear her TMN name badge on these hikes. Since this will be a TMN Volunteer Project, the Board agreed that it would be both appropriate and desirable for Charlie to wear her TMN name badge, if this is acceptable to the State Park.

**6. New Database Manager:** John Huecksteadt also reported that Lee Kneupper from Bandera, a member of our Class of 2007, is interested in being our new Chapter Database Manager for 2008. Lee and Nyta Hensley, our current Database Manager who is stepping down after two years of excellent service, will work together on entering the Chapter member's hours reported in November and on the Chapter Annual Report that is prepared in early January 2008. Lee has professional experience with the Access application, which will be extremely helpful to him as our Database Manager.

**7. Class Representative to the Chapter Board:** John also reported that our Class of 2007 had elected Lee Kneupper as their representative to our Chapter Board.

**8. Volunteer Projects List Updated on our Website:** President Phyllis Muska reported that Volunteer Project Director Jerri Workman had told her that the updated Volunteer Projects list is now available on our Chapter website. Jerri was unable to attend today due to illness.

**9. Recognition List for our Holiday Party:** Phyllis Muska reviewed the categories of members that would receive recognition awards at our Holiday Party, including officers and Board members, departing Committee chairs (Webmaster, Database and Archivist), Class Planning Committee, Chapter Operating

Manual Committee, Nominating Committee, Class Planning Guidelines Committee, Holiday Party Planning Committee, and members achieving cumulative volunteer hour Milestones in 2007.

The Holiday Party Planning Committee has invited two recent recipients of the annual Friend of the Chapter award and their wives to join us, including Rufus Stephens and Bill Lindemann. Dr. Bill Ward, our longtime Geology Class and field trip instructor, will receive the 2007 Friend of the Chapter award, which consists of a copper TMN Dragonfly pin and a recognition gift. Vice-President Betty Gardner moved that the gift certificate be for \$50. Treasurer Marilyn Murrmann seconded, and the motion carried. The gift certificate will be for a plant nursery in Boerne frequented by Bill Ward.

**10. Land Trust Land Management Work as a TMN Volunteer Project:** Secretary Priscilla Stanley asked if land management work through a 501(c)(3) Land Trust would be considered a TMN volunteer project. She noted that obtaining a conservation easement on well-managed rural land that would prevent development and fragmentation of that land and would specify agreed upon land management practices for the current and future owners in perpetuity seemed to contribute toward “the beneficial management of natural resources and natural areas in our communities”, as described in the TMN Mission Statement. Such a project might offer a natural progression for members currently involved in our Land Management Assistance Program. Jim Stanley has been involved in this work as a Director in a local Land Trust participating in land evaluations on the suitability of a property for a conservation easement, performing baseline studies describing the condition of the land entering into the conservation easement, preparing Land Management Plans acceptable to the owner and the Land Trust and conducting annual visits monitoring the compliance of the ongoing land management with the terms of the conservation easement. Jim would consider counting only his work in the land management area of his Land Trust work. Land Trust work has been approved as a Volunteer Project by the Highland Lakes TMN Chapter. After some discussion, Vice-President Betty Gardner moved that the land management aspects of Land Trust work be accepted as a Volunteer Project. The motion was seconded and carried.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:05 PM

**Next Board meeting: Wednesday, December 12th at 2:00 PM in the Nature Lab (to the left of the pavilion).** This meeting will include time for departing officers and Board members to pass information and files to the incoming Board members. The date for this meeting was moved ahead one week to avoid meeting the week before Christmas. Hill Country Chapter members and Advisors are always welcome to attend.

Respectfully submitted,

*Priscilla B. Stanley*

Priscilla B. Stanley  
Chapter Secretary

11/23/07