# LINDHEIMER MASTER NATURALISTS

**BOARD MEETING**

**JANUARY 22, 2018**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Rich Nielson, Evelyn Nielson, Joel Dunnington, Kim Wright, Brian Trock, Sara Riggs, Darlene Varga, Jim Doyle, Jeanie Springer, Debbie Kyrouac, Marilyn McFarland, Troy Luepke

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Mike Hammack

**GUEST:** Bill Suddith who appeared briefly to take a picture of the new officers and chairs

**CALL TO ORDER:** The meeting was called to order at 5:30 PM. Brian Trock suggested that we start our BOD meetings at 5 PM in the future. Jeanie Springer seconded. Motion passed.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** Brian Trock said that a statement attributed to him at the Annual meeting was actually made by Joel Dunnington. The statement was in reference to reminding members to submit their 2017 hours to VMS as soon as possible before January 10, 2018. Joel Dunnington moved that the Annual meeting minutes be amended to reflect this change; Kim Wright seconded. Motion passed.

**PRESIDENT’S REPORT:**

Rich Nielson, as newly elected president, asked the BOD and committee chairs to brainstorm ideas for various ways to improve our Chapter and its operations.

**Communications:**

1. Update the website on a timely basis
2. Have the same person be assistant to the webmaster and the Out and About
3. Email the newsletter to the membership in addition to it being on the website
4. Be better about reading emails
5. Send a reminder about Out and About happenings
6. Adopt Hoot Suite, a system for generating social media push
7. List the monthly chapter meeting speaker on the website

**Promotion:**

1. More articles and notices in local newspapers (get Michael Varhala to put something in the Zeitung); Other newspapers include the Boerne Star, Hill Country Weekly, and Impact.
2. Post items on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter
3. Promote LMN at various festivals and events throughout the year--- Wein and Saengerfest, Comal County Fair, Folk Fest, Earth Day, Science Fest
4. Select a TMN 20th Anniversary representative
5. Get a list of local HOA websites (Troy says he has a list)
6. Have a link to the State Facebook page
7. Utilize the Board of Realtors
8. Promote with the neighborhoods (Next Door)

**Education:**

1. Public education and outreach through the Traveling Trunks, Speakers’ Bureau, Comal County Fair, Earth Day, Science Fest
2. Facebook presence
3. iNaturalists
4. PAL (previously named SLOAP---Smart Landowners Program)
5. List Serve
6. Check the TMN website for links to educational opportunities

**OFFICER AND COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

1. **Treasurer---**Evelyn reported on December’s activity. She also submitted the end of the year budget report for 2017. See reports. Joel Dunnington moved that the Treasurer’s report be approved; Jeanie Springer seconded. Motion passed.
2. **Vice President-**--Jim Doyle reported the February chapter meeting speaker will be Adam Slussel from the CEMEX plant. In March Art Williams will speak. April has not been filled yet. In May Kathleen Scott, who was originally scheduled for January, will speak on Hummingbirds.
3. **Past President-**--Joel Dunnington reported that the Headwaters of Comal had a meeting on January 20. There are 25 volunteers in training. Brian Trock said that 3 members have submitted hours for this training. On February 17-18 the Great Backyard Bird Count will take place. On February 22, there will be a talk on the Big Year by a man in Texas who has counted hundreds of birds for his Life List. On March 23-24, the Headwaters will be open and the theme will be Water. Earth Day will be on Sunday, April 22 and in May they will celebrate World Turtle Day. In October the subject will be Archaeology.

Joel reported that he met with the Friends of Land Preservation in Comal County. This group wants to appropriate more land for natural preservation. He said several LMN members attended this meeting. New Braunfels is about 500 acres behind in having land for parks. Joel said that Rancho Cima is for sale and that it might be purchased for the land.

1. **Communications---**Marilyn McFarland reported that she will communicate with Jennifer Hendren about how often we want to put items on social media. The committee will meet on this. Marilyn reported that many members are not reading the Newsletter. She said she is going to ask Marie Miller how many hits we are getting on the website each month. Marilyn wants to survey the membership at the next meeting. The Newsletter could be included as a link to an email sent to the members. Marilyn said that the new class in training has not gotten the recognition they deserve, such as class photos and field trip pictures. Debbie Kyrouac said that Brian Cruz is the new class’s photographer and he has taken pictures of each class member so that the students can learn each other’s names. Marilyn said that she will contact Brian. Bill Suddith takes pictures at our meetings and special requests, but he does not attend all festivals and events. Marilyn said that she could take pictures at the events she attends.
2. **Education-**--Debbie Kyrouac said that there is no permanent person assigned to video the classes. Sara Riggs said that there a 4 people who are available to video who are temporary. Debbie said that she has a set of DVD’s that she carries with her. Kristen Martinez, the new class leader, has set up committees for Earth Day at TPML. Darlene Varga asked if TPML has the event on their calendar. That needs to be the first important step! We want to try to attract older children to Earth Day. Someone said that many high school students need to do community service to put on their college applications. Marilyn McFarland asked if there is a Junior Master Naturalists program. The State does not have a curriculum for it. Rich Nielson asked Debbie if the new class has a class representative who could attend BOD meetings. Debbie said she would look into it.
3. **Membership-**--Brian Trock sent out 3 documents. See reports. He said 6 members did not submit any hours for 2017. He sent out emails to those members; only 3 responded. He will move the non-responders to Inactive status at the end of the month. Brian brought our attention to the VMS newsletter. It specifically states that anyone who does not agree to a Background Check cannot volunteer at any Master Naturalist event or project. Our chapter has 1 member who refuses the background check. Troy Luepke says that the State is very clear on this and we have to follow the rules. This non-compliant member will be put on Inactive status until they agree to a check. Joel Dunnington said he told the State that they need to put this requirement in the By-Law. Troy said he will address this issue with the State.
4. **Projects-**--Jeanie Springer reported that January has been a very active month. See report. She has updated the Project list on the Excel spreadsheet for the website. Brian Trock said that he sent Jeanie a reminder that at least 4 Advanced Training hours have to be traditional ways for earning hours, such as approved talks, training, etc. They cannot all be live webinars.
5. **Outreach-**--Darlene Varga submitted a 2017 report. It lists numbers of adults and children reached at various events. See report. Darlene asked if the SLOAP program is considered Outreach. It is. Darlene wants to send out a survey to canvass the members about their expertise or experience in certain areas. Coco Brennan and David Reel will work on organizing a Geology trunk, a Plant trunk, and an Entomology trunk. Darlene does not want the trunks stored in the Agrilife location because they have suffered damage and several things have had to be replaced. Marilyn McFarland said she will have to replace the Snake trunk. Darlene would like a climate controlled environment for the trunks. Rich Nielson said he would check on the storage. The chapter had a storage locker several years ago before putting items at Agrilife’s storage.

The issue of chapter dues came up. Maybe the dues could help pay for the storage. Other chapters pay dues. Paying dues lets you know who plans to be active. Brian Trock thinks that we will lose 25% of our members if we charge dues.

1. **PAL (SLOAP)**---Art Williams was absent. Troy Luepke said that Art met with him. Troy said Coco Brennan sent him a form from Parks and Wildlife. She wants to reword the form to state that the landowner is to call Agrilife if they want someone to come to their property. Troy will let Art know.

**COMMENTS:**

Troy Luepke showed the BOD the new cabinets located in the classroom. One is for the Master Gardeners and the one located nearest the bathrooms is for the Master Naturalists. It is to be used for storage of books, supplies, papers, etc. It can be locked if needed.

Troy said if anyone comes during the daytime, they will see a water trailer on the grounds. It is to be used for displays for rainwater harvesting and stream erosion. Troy said that if anyone wants to volunteer to email him. It will be used for education at schools, fairs, etc.

Troy said that if anyone does a presentation as a Master Naturalist, they need to have a sign-in sheet for attendees. This should be sent to Troy at the end of each month. Darlene Varga said that members need to be alerted to this request by Troy. He needs these numbers to report to higher entities. Susan James has given talks but never turned in any sign-in sheets. Rich Nielson asked Troy to send out the sign-in sheet electronically.

Brian Trock asked Troy when the WiFi was repaired. Troy wasn’t sure but it’s up and running.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

Joel Dunnington said that the chapter will donate a tree and possibly a plaque to honor the memory of Marlin Brendsel. Joel said he needs to contact the family about permission for the memorial. We have gotten the cameras returned that Marlin used.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

Brian Trock said that the Chapter Operating Handbook is outdated again. Joel Dunnington said that he cannot move on it until State finalizes their version.

**ADJOURNMENT:** Kim Wright moved that the meeting be adjourned; Darlene Varga seconded. Meeting was adjourned at 6:35 PM.

Respectfully submitted by:

Kim Wright, Secretary

Lindheimer Master Naturalists