



**Minutes: Rio Brazos Master Naturalist Chapter
November 3, 2016
Camp El Tesoro**

Guests

Although not “guests” there was a special table set for Dave and Wendy Moore who celebrated their wedding anniversary with a lovely covered dish supper, complete with Chicken Express and gravy. Wanda Riley brought her friend **Roberta Robinson**, who serves as a naturalist during summers at Yellowstone National Park. Nadia brought her sons, **Ben and Ethan**, who lately have become Citizen Scientists raising Monarchs and tagging Monarchs and being an integral part of the Monarch Event. Tanner Rhone presented the newest member of the Camp El Tesoro staff, **Naomi Healy**.

Program: presented by Rachel Richter, Urban Wildlife Biologist, Texas Parks and Wildlife

Topic: Teaming with Wildlife.

Rachel began her presentation by explaining the wide range of responsibilities that fall under the purview of TPW in the areas of wildlife management. These include finding sustainable funding; management of the large number of eco regions and the large diversity of species within each; control of problems in eco regions such as invasive species; dealing with emerging diseases which affect various species such as bats, reptiles, birds and deer; managing water quality, pollution, per capita use and groundwater recharge; dealing with moving variables of climate change; and urban sprawl.

She spoke of the Blue Ribbon Panel convened to address the problem of sustainable funding for wildlife conservation, the various plans investigated, the commitment of the panel to continue not just with recommendations for criteria to develop funding dedicated to wildlife conservation, but they will continue to work at it to have it attainable in 5 years and sustained for at least 10 years. She mentioned US House Bill 5650, “Recovering America’s Wildlife Act,” which likely will not be acted upon this session, but will be reintroduced in next year’s congressional session.

She then focused particularly on “Teaming with Wildlife,” programming which addresses Species of Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN) and the Texas Conservation Action Plan (TCAP). These programs look at what to do to make the best of a situation, how to be proactive by identifying problems of species in decline and in need of immediate action before they reach threatened or endangered status. Texas has identified 1310 Species of Greatest Conservation Need.

To learn more Look up Texas Conservation Action Plan handbook on the TPW websites. A good place to start is the TCAP homepage with links to the overview and statewide/multi region handbooks, spreadsheets identifying the 1310 SGCN, 11 specific eco region handbooks, and more. The site is <http://tpwd.texas.gov/landwater/land/tcap/> To learn more or join in the Teaming with Texas Wildlife efforts go to www.teamingtxwildlife.com Karly Robinson is the state coordinator may be reached at K.Robinson@teamingtxwildlife.org

Business Meeting

Minutes : Scott Taylor Minutes were posted to website and approved by vote.

Treasurer's Report: Jim Crocker No outstanding bills were in need of payment. Current balance is \$8564. State By-laws note DUES ARE TO BE PAID BY JANUARY 1. Dues are \$25 (for individual) or \$35 (family). Please mail your dues to Jim Crocker 7300 Rendon New Hope Road, Fort Worth, TX 76140. You may also pay your dues at the December 1 meeting.

Training Committee: Robert Theimer "They're trained!"

18 people finished the class. Many have been very active already.

The next training program is now under development. We have already had some wanting to sign up. Some of membership will assist in teaching future classes.

Outreach: Billy Teels 1st Saturday Bird Walk will be 7:00 AM at ANC. This should be a good month. Billy noted seeing 2 new species of warblers back and 10 species while observing in the bird blind.

Newsletter articles should be in by December 1, so it can be published before Christmas. Authors, give Billy an early Christmas present and get those articles & photos in quick!

Dayna mentioned that we have gotten several sign-ups showing interest in joining through our outreach at different events. The MN booth and different displays or activities we take part in at various events are definitely raising awareness and helping the chapter with positive exposure and increasing applications for membership. More members are encouraged to take part in manning the booth and taking it along with us more often as we engage the public at different events.

Pioneer Days in Cleburne will be a 3 day event. Chapter organizers asked that RBMN be there for one of those days. The MN booth will be up and running on Friday, November 18. More volunteers are needed to work either a few hours or all day.

The monarch event had 631 in attendance, and 150-200 monarchs were tagged between the ANC event and other citizen scientist endeavors.

Friends of Cleburne State Park: Jim Crocker Last Saturday's Trunk or Treat was well attended with several hundred costumed kids and about 25 dogs, half of them in costume, engaged in traditional candy hustling and also taking part in hikes and night sounds presentations.

Nature hikes will be continued through November. Jim had one a week ago with 58 people.

The park store is open and doing well. Lots of hats and hiking sticks are being sold.

Homeschoolers: Dayna Inbody

Dayna mentioned that Malea will be back in January. The next program will be with Zach Davis at his place in Somervell County. The program will be focused on water education: stream education, wells, and the Prairielands trailer will be there

December will have no formal class, but the homeschoolers will be invited to attend S'mores with Santa at the ANC. By the January classes, Malea will be back.

New Officers Slate presented: Dave Moore

Treasurer - Henry Bogusch, Secretary - Sarah Paulsen, Vice-President - Tessa Ownbey-Chenoa, President: Gary Hinds when he retires from active employment in a couple months. Meanwhile, Dayna will continue as president and will resign when Gary becomes available.

Camp El Tesoro: Tanner Rhone Lots of changes are happening

The Texas Outdoor Education at Camp El Tesoro is official. There is an opening for hiring a new coordinator. The full time position is being posted for applications.

Breakfast with Santa will be December 3. Volunteers are needed to help with approximately 300 or more. Volunteers are to come at 7:00 when they will be served a hot breakfast. Then the event begins at 8:00 AM. In addition to breakfast, there will be hayrides, Christmas carols, archery, pictures (Selfies with the elfie)

BIG NEWS: Camp El Tesoro is now a year around operation. They have already booked about 12 3 day/2 night groups per year. On November 15-17 there will be 120 5th graders + 40 adults coming from the Eagle Mountain-Saginaw ISD's Chisholm Ranch school for. Volunteers are needed.

Family Weekend had 48 families, approximately 275 people in attendance with the Texas Amateur Metal Detecting group. The Cleburne Dutch Oven group came. It was an overall great success.

A question was raised if the Master Naturalist BACKGROUND CHECK was sufficient for working with youth at Camp El Tesoro, or if El Tesoro (Campfire) had its own background check system. The answer is this: The Campfire organization - and therefore Camp El Tesoro – requires their own background check. It is done through Verify. Tanner explained that Campfire is emphatic about their responsibility for protection of the youth entrusted to them. Therefore the background check form much more extensive than the one the MN's use through TPWD, and because of that, some folks may be reluctant to list some of the required information. Because of the extensive background information, the form is not available to be filled out online. Contact Tanner for the form. You would fill it out, and either mail it directly or fax it. If you prefer, you can give it directly to Tanner who will process it to the appropriate folks.

Education Committee: Dayna Inbody We have lost Gail Bradshaw to Prairie Oaks. Our loss is their very positive gain. But we welcomed 2 new members, Valerie Taberand Andrea Roiz, who have already brought new activities and excitement to our educational mission.

RBMN is being contacted by many more schools due to the outreach already done with field trips to the ANC and class directed programming on school campuses. Once word-of-mouth gets going among teachers, we will be as busy as we want to be.

Our primary focus for the next few months will be inventorying, brainstorming, and completing many of the education trunks. This involves not only materials gathering, but complete lessons "canned" and ready for use. Members are asked to write out or record any lessons they normally teach, so that they may be coordinated with school curriculum requirements, and also so that they may be made available for others to implement in your absence. Also, specific requests will be made for items needed to complete the trunks.

Trunk workday is Saturday, Nov 19 at Dave & Wendy Moore's. Contact them for directions.

Feather Fest is the next big public event we are planning for.

State Meeting Report: 6 members attended (4 current) Valerie Tabor, Alan Sarver, Dayna and Chris Inbody attended for RBMN, and 2, Seth Hamby and Kenneth Nalley who were representing Prairie Oaks, but who are still on our roster until their chapter is officially chartered.

New Volunteer Opportunities: Maryann Mathews There will be a lot going on in the future at the Chisholm Trail & Big Bear Museum site in Cleburne. Presently they want to develop an interpretive nature trail behind the museum. There will be many opportunities as this venue is developed, and its easy access is a plus for both MN's to go to volunteer there.

Membership/VMS: Wanda Riley Folks have been pretty good about getting hours in. State has asked that hours be posted as soon as possible after earning, and to get all our 2016 hours in by December 31.

Membership/VMS (continued)

Chris Inbody reported that our chapter's VMS postings had recently been audited. Out of 3500 line items posted, there were only 40 that required clarification and needed to be fixed.

Chapter Field Trip: November 6-13 at Petit Jean State Park in Arkansas. About 23 members are going. Lots of hikes, some educational programming, and community meals are planned.

Website: Chris Inbody The CALENDAR is constantly being updated, so be sure to check out what's coming up.

Be sure to check your listing on the membership roster and verify accuracy of contact info.

Dayna noted that several organizations and individuals are coming to the RBMN website to see what's going on, either seeking to participate in or attend events posted or determine if the RBMN's fit with their programs

REMINDER: DUES ARE DUE BY DECEMBER 31. \$25-Individual, \$35 – Family

Give your payment to Jim Crocker at the December meeting or better yet, mail your check to

Jim Crocker

7300 Rendon New Hope Road

Fort Worth, TX 76140.

